fornia
nal
y

David Bickersteth. Bosh 18

(117)

Digitized by the Internet Archive
in 2007 with funding from
Microsoft Corporation

http://www.archive.org/details/moderntraveller25condiala

THE

MODERN TRAVELLER.

VOLUME THE TWENTY-FIFTH.

MEXICO AND GUATIMALA.

VOL. I.

THE

MODERN TRAVELLER.

A

DESCRIPTION,

GEOGRAPHICAL, HISTORICAL, AND TOPOGRAPHICAL,

OF THE

VARIOUS COUNTRIES OF THE GLOBE.

IN THIRTY VOLUMES.

By JOSIAH CONDER.

VOLUME THE TWENTY-FIFTH.

LONDON:

JAMES DUNCAN, 37, PATERNOSTER-ROW.

MDCCCXXX.

LONDON:
Printed by W. CLOWES,
Stamford-street.

CONTENTS

OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

MEXICO.

	PAGE
BOUNDARIES	1
GRAND DIVISIONS OF SPANISH AMERICA	ib.
PROVINCIAL DIVISIONS OF NEW SPAIN	3
HISTORY OF THE CONQUEST OF MEXICO	6
VIEW OF MEXICO UNDER THE COLONIAL SYSTEM	84
HISTORY OF THE FIRST REVOLUTIONARY WAR	100
HISTORY OF THE SECOND REVOLUTION	129
DISTRIBUTION OF MEXICO INTO FEDERAL STATES	153
LANDING AND DEATH OF ITURBIDE	157
RECOGNITION OF THE MEXICAN REPUBLIC	160
PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY	161
NATURAL HISTORY AND PRODUCTIONS	177
POPULATION AND CASTES	188
VERA CRUZ	216
FROM VERA CRUZ TO MEXICO	228
LA PUEBLA	243
PYRAMID OF CHOLULA	253
CITY OF MEXICO	261

PAGE
PUBLIC AMUSEMENTS 292
TRADES AND COSTUME 299
ENVIRONS OF MEXICO 311
FROM MEXICO TO THEMASCALTEPEC 319
FROM MEXICO TO TEZCUCO AND OTUMBA 330
ACAPULCO 340
FROM ACAPULCO TO MEXICO 344
ZACATULA 345
FROM TAMPICO TO MEXICO 346
BASALTIC ROCKS AND CASCADE OF REGLA 356
CAVERN OF TEHUILOTEPEC 358
MINES OF REAL DEL MONTE 361
FROM MEXICO TO GUANAXUATO 363

THE

MODERN TRAVELLER,

ETC. ETC.

MEXICO.

[A state of North America, lying between lat. 38° N., and lat. 10° N.; bounded on the N., by unappropriated territory; on the E., by Louisiana, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Carribean sea; on the S., (including Guatimala,) by the Pacific Ocean and Colombia; on the W., by the Ocean.]

THE dominions of the crown of Spain, in the two Americas, extended from lat. 37° 48′ N., to 41° 43′ S.,* a space of seventy-nine degrees, equalling in length the whole of Africa, and surpassing in extent the immense countries in Asia subject to Great Britain and Russia. They were divided into nine distinct governments: the vice-royalty of Mexico, and the captain-generalships of Guatimala, Porto Rico, and Cuba, (the latter including Florida,) in North America; the vice-royalties of New Granada, Peru, and Buenos Ayres, and the captain-generalships of the Caraccas and of Chili, in South America. Mexico, or New Spain, was considered as the most valuable of

* That is, from the mission of San Francisco, on the coast of New California, to Fort Maullin, on the coast of Chili.

them all; and in point both of territorial wealth and of population, as well as in its advantageous position for commercial communications, this country must still rank as the first in importance among the new states which are asserting their independence in the western hemisphere. The name of Mexico has been conventionally given to all the Spanish provinces to the north of the isthmus of Panama, Florida excepted; and, in fact, the supreme military authority of the viceroy extended over the whole of this vast region. Guatimala, however, claims to be considered as a distinct territory. Exclusively of this, the kingdom of New Spain extended from the sixteenth to the thirty-eighth parallel of north latitude, over a tract upwards of six hundred leagues in a direction S.E. and N.W., and varying in breadth from 364 leagues to 45. To the north and east, its limits are vague and questionable. Arid savannahs, resembling the deserts of Tartary, separate what are called the *provincias internas*, or back settlements, from the territory of the United States.

"The north-west coast of America," says M. Humboldt, "furnishes to this day no other stable settlements than Russian and Spanish colonies. Before the inhabitants of the United States, in their progressive movement from east to west, could reach the shore between the latitude of 41° and 50°, that long separated the Spanish monks and the Siberian hunters, the latter had established themselves south of the river Columbia. Thus, in New California, the missionaries of San Francisco, men estimable for their morals and their agricultural activity, learnt with astonishment that Greek priests had arrived in their neighbourhood; and that two nations who inhabit the eastern and western extremities of Europe, were be-

come neighbours on a coast of America opposite to China." *

For a long time, the viceroys of Mexico looked upon the whole north-west coast of America as comprehended within their government, affecting to make New Spain border on Tartary and Greenland; † but, after considerable discussion, the Court of Madrid agreed to adopt Cape Mendocino, in lat. 40° 29′, as the definitive boundary towards the north. Eastward, the river Sabine, which flows directly southward into the Gulf of Mexico, has been held the boundary between the Spanish territory and that of the United States; but the Congress wish to make the basin of the Rio Bravo del Norte the eastern limit of Mexico.‡ On the south, its boundaries are the Pacific Ocean, and a line drawn from the port of Tehuantepec to the bay of Honduras, separating it from Guatimala. On the west, its shores are washed by the Great Ocean.

According to the ancient division of the territory, New Spain comprehended, 1. The kingdom of Mexico. 2. The kingdom of New Gallicia. 3. The kingdom of New Leon. 4. The colony of St. Andero. 5. The province of Texas. 6. The province of Cohahuila. 7. The province of New Biscay. 8. The province of Sonora. 9. The province of New Mexico. 10. & 11. The provinces of Old and New California.

* Humboldt's Pers. Narrative, vol. v. part i. p. 302.—In 1804, the little fortress at the bay of Jakutal belonging to the Russian company, was still 600 leagues distant from the most northern Mexican possessions.

† So late as the year 1770, M. Humboldt states, the Cardinal Lorenzana asserted, in a work published at Mexico, that New Spain, in the remotest confines of the bishopric of Durango, perhaps borders on Tartary and Greenland; by the Californias on Tartary, and by New Mexico on Greenland.

‡ As the Rio Bravo enters the Gulf in a S.E. direction, the disputed territory forms a *trapezium* of 47,469 square leagues.

But, in the year 1776, these old divisions were partly superseded by a new arrangement, which distributed them into twelve intendencies and three provinces, viz.

TO THE NORTH OF THE TROPIC.

1. The province of New Mexico, extending along the Rio del Norte.
2. The intendency of New Biscay, or Durango.
3. The province of New California.
4. ——————— Old California.
5. The intendency of Sonora.
6. ——————— San Luis Potosi, comprising Texas, Cohahuila, St. Andero, and New Leon.

TO THE SOUTH OF THE TROPIC.

7. The intendency of Zacatecas. } New Gallicia.
8. ——————— Guadalaxara. }
9. ——————— Guanaxuato. } Kingdom of Mexico.
10. ——————— Valladolid. }
11. ——————— Mexico. }
12. ——————— Puebla. }
13. ——————— Vera Cruz. }
14. ——————— Oaxaca. }
15. ——————— Merida or Yucatan. }

The first six divisions, almost entirely included within the temperate zone, were computed to contain, in 1805, a population of 677,000 souls, distributed over an extent of 82,000 square leagues, which gives a proportion of eight inhabitants to a square league. The latter nine intendencies, situated under the torrid zone, contained a population of 5,160,000 souls within an area of 36,500 square leagues, or 141 inhabitants to every square league; but four-fifths of this population were concentrated upon the ridge of the Cordillera, or on elevated plateaus.* The grand total was 118,478 square leagues, and 5,837,100 inhabitants.

* The intendency of Mexico contained 255 inhabitants to every square league; Guanaxuato, 568; Vera Cruz, only 38.

The civil government of these several provinces and intendencies was under the control of two supreme councils (*audienzas reales*); the *audienza* of Guadalaxara, which exerted its authority over the districts formerly known by the name of New Gallicia, and all to the northward; and the *audienza* of Mexico. In the Viceroy of Mexico was vested the supreme executive power, but the northern intendencies were formed into two distinct, though subordinate military governments. Sonora, New Biscay, New Mexico, and the Californias, constituted the western captaincy: Cohahuila, Texas, St. Andero, and New Leon, comprehending the greater part of the intendency of San Luis Potosi, the eastern captaincy. The commandant-general of the western provinces was also the head of the civil administration as regarded matters of finances; but part of the eastern captaincy, viz. Leon, St. Andero, and the districts of Charcas, Catorce, and Altamira, in the intendency of San Luis, (that is, the whole of that intendency except Texas and Cohahuila,) were under the immediate authority, in all civil affairs, of the Viceroy of Mexico. Although these complicated arrangements have been overturned by the revolution, it will be found necessary to be acquainted with the former divisions.

Mexico, then, it will be seen, is an appellation common to the capital, the ancient kingdom, the modern intendency, the vice-royalty, and, improperly, to the whole of the Spanish possessions formerly subordinated to the viceroy. It now designates an independent Republic, which already numbers eight millions of subjects. We must briefly retrace the history of the country.

HISTORY OF MEXICO.

TWENTY-SEVEN years had elapsed since Columbus discovered the first land in the new world,* and in the interval, Pinzon and Cabral had successively made the discovery of the southern peninsula, when, in 1519, Cortes landed on the coast of New Spain, in the character, not of a discoverer, but of an invader. He had been appointed to the command of the armament by the governor of Cuba; but the jealousy of Velasquez led him to revoke the commission, and to send orders for his arrest. Cortes had the address to defeat all his schemes, and having secured the allegiance of the soldiers, he resolved to prosecute the enterprise on his own responsibility. His fleet consisted of eleven vessels: the largest was of only 100 tons; three were of 70 or 80 tons, and the rest were open barks. He landed first on the island of Cozumel off the coast of Yucatan, which had been discovered two years before. Here he mustered his little army, which consisted of 508 soldiers, including 16 horsemen, with ten small field-pieces and four falconets, and 109 seamen or artificers. "With this slender and ill-provided train," says Dr. Robertson, "did Cortes set sail to make war upon a monarch whose dominions

* Columbus discovered the Bahama isles in 1492, and the islands of Cuba and Hispaniola in the same year. Pinzon made the coast of Brazil in Jan. 1500, and Cabral landed at Porto Seguro on Easter day following. Two years after, Columbus discovered the coast of the continent from Cape Gracias to Porto Bello. In 1510, the first Spanish settlement on the main land was begun at Santa Maria on the Gulf of Darien, by Vasco Nunez de Balboa. The peninsula of Yucatan was first discovered by Francisco Hernandez Cordova, an opulent planter in Cuba, in 1517; and the coast of New Spain, by Juan de Grijalva, in the year following.

were more extensive than all the kingdoms subject to the Spanish crown." On proceeding to the river Tabasco, where he hoped to meet with a friendly reception from the natives, as Grijalva had the preceding year, he was violently attacked by them. They advanced in great numbers, and with extraordinary courage, but they were routed in several successive actions with great slaughter, and at length were sufficiently intimidated to sue for peace, as the conditions of which they were induced to acknowledge the King of Castile as their sovereign, and granted Cortes a supply of provisions, with a present of cotton garments, some gold, and twenty female slaves. * This last proved the most valuable portion of the offering; for one of these slaves, who afterwards figured in the history of the New World, under the name of Donna Marina, was a native of Mexico, and her services as interpreter proved of the greatest importance. The Spaniards continued their course westward, and on entering the harbour of St. Juan de Ullua, they were met by an embassy from the authorities of the country, who addressed Cortes in a most respectful manner, but in a language unknown to Aguilar, his interpreter, on whose acquaintance with the Indian dialects Cortes had relied for establishing an intercourse with the natives. Fortunately, however, Donna Marina was able to explain their message in the Yucatan tongue, with which Aguilar was acquainted; and thus Cortes learned that the envoys were sent from the governor of the province and the military chief, to inquire what were his

* In the decisive action, De Solis attributes no small effect to the horses, the strangeness of which, he says, terrified the Indians, who had never seen any before, and imagined them to be fierce monsters, half man and half beast.

intentions in visiting the coast, and to offer him what assistance he might need in order to prosecute his voyage. Cortes, in reply, made professions of the most friendly nature, assuring them, that he came to propose matters of the utmost consequence to their prince and all his empire, which he would more fully unfold in person to the governor and the general. Next morning, without waiting for any answer, Cortes landed his troops, his horses, and his artillery, and began to erect huts for his men, and to fortify his camp. The natives, instead of opposing the entrance of these fatal guests into their country, assisted them with alacrity in these operations. They brought them also cotton cloths to spread over their huts, and supplied them with provisions, by order, it is said, of the governor.* In the best of the huts, Cortes, with that religious enthusiasm which singularly blended with ambition, avarice, and ferocity, in all these Spanish adventurers, set up an image of the Virgin Mary, with a large cross at the entrance, and mass was performed in celebration of Easter. † On the third day, Pilpatoe, the governor of the province, and Teutile, the commander of the forces, repaired to the Spanish camp with a numerous retinue, where they were received with the utmost ceremony: they were invited to attend the celebration of mass, and afterwards were feasted at a banquet. Cortes then proceeded to an-

* De Solis attributes this apparent generosity and simplicity of the natives to policy and fear; for they were terrified, he says, with the report of the success of the Spaniards at Tabasco, which had spread over all the country.

† The day on which he landed was Good Friday. Bernal Diaz and Herrera state, that mass was performed the same day; but De Solis expresses his surprise at their falling into such a mistake, since the chaplains of Cortes must have known that mass could not be said on Good Friday.

nounce, that he came as ambassador from Don Carlos of Austria, King of Castile, the greatest monarch of the East, and that he was intrusted with proposals of such moment, that he could impart them to none but the Emperor Montezuma himself; he therefore required them to conduct him into the presence of their master. The Mexican authorities could not conceal their uneasiness at this request; but, to soften their refusal, they first ordered the presents to be brought in, which they had prepared with a view to conciliate the good-will of the strangers. They consisted of fine cotton-cloth, plumes of various colours, and ornaments of wrought gold and silver. The display of these served only to stimulate in the Spaniards the lust of conquest; and when Teutile proceeded to dissuade Cortes from visiting the capital, he replied in a haughty and determined tone, that kings never refused to receive the embassies of other princes; and insisted on their acquainting Montezuma with his arrival. During this interview, some native artists had been diligently employed in delineating upon white cotton cloths, representations of the ships, horses, artillery, soldiers, and every thing else belonging to the strangers, which struck them as remarkable. Cortes, having notice of this, and learning that these pictures were to be despatched to Montezuma, resolved to give further employment to the skill of these painters, and to strengthen the impression made on the minds of the native chiefs, by the exhibition of a sham fight. Mounting his horse, he ordered the trumpets to sound an alarm, and the troops, forming into two bodies, skirmished in a martial manner. The Mexicans looked on in silent amazement, especially at the agility with which the cavalry performed their evolutions; for, "observing the obedient fierceness

of those beasts," says De Solis, "they began to think there was something more than natural in those men that managed them. But when, at a signal given by Cortes, the fire-arms, and then the artillery were discharged, some fell to the ground, others fled, and those who had most presence of mind, affected admiration to dissemble their fear." Cortes dismissed his guests with some trifling presents. To Montezuma himself, he sent some glass, a Holland shirt, a cap of crimson velvet adorned with a gold medal, and a tapestry chair. Though the capital was above 180 miles distant, the pictures and the presents were forwarded to the sovereign, and his answer returned in a few days. Montezuma, it seems, had couriers posted at convenient distances along the principal roads, by which means intelligence was transmitted to the capital with astonishing rapidity. His answer was a refusal to allow of the nearer approach of the foreigners; but this, too, was introduced with a conciliatory present to the Spanish general, expressive at once of the monarch's magnificence and his fears. It consisted of specimens of the manufactures of the country; cotton stuffs so fine and of so delicate a texture as to resemble silk; pictures of animals, trees, and other natural objects, formed with feathers of different colours most ingeniously disposed; two large circular plates, one of gold, representing the sun, the other of silver, representing the moon; with a variety of golden ornaments and precious stones.* Cortes received all these with an appearance of the profoundest respect, but, to the consternation of the Mexicans, represented that, with every wish to shew his obedience to their monarch, it

* According to one Spanish historian (Lopez de Gomara), this rich present had been prepared for Grijalva, when he touched at this place some months before, against his expected return.

was impossible for him to leave the country, consistently with his duty to his own sovereign, until he had been admitted into the presence of the prince whom he had been appointed to visit in his name.

"The firmness," says Dr. Robertson, "with which Cortes adhered to his original proposal, should naturally have brought the negotiation between him and Montezuma to a speedy issue, as it seemed to leave the Mexican monarch no choice, but either to receive him with confidence as a friend, or to oppose him openly as an enemy. The latter was what might have been expected from a haughty prince in possession of extensive power. The Mexican empire, at this period, was at a pitch of grandeur to which no society ever attained in so short a period. Though it had subsisted, according to their own traditions, only 130 years, its dominion extended from the north to the south sea, over territories stretching, with some small interruption, above five hundred leagues from east to west, and more than two hundred from north to south, comprehending provinces not inferior in fertility, population, and opulence, to any in the torrid zone. The people were warlike and enterprising; the authority of the monarch unbounded, and his revenues considerable. If, with the forces which might have been suddenly assembled in such an empire, Montezuma had fallen upon the Spaniards while encamped on a barren, unhealthy coast, unsupported by any ally, without a place of retreat, and destitute of provisions, it seems to be impossible, even with all the advantages of their superior discipline and arms, that they could have stood the shock, and they must either have perished in such an unequal contest, or have abandoned the enterprise.

"As the power of Montezuma enabled him to take

this spirited part, his own dispositions were such as seemed naturally to prompt him to it. Of all the princes who had swayed the Mexican sceptre, he was the most haughty, the most violent, and the most impatient of control. His subjects looked up to him with awe, and his enemies with terror. The former he governed with unexampled rigour, but they were impressed with such an opinion of his capacity, as commanded their respect; and by many victories over the latter, he had spread far the dread of his arms, and had added several considerable provinces to his dominions. But, though his talents might be suited to the transactions of a state so imperfectly polished as the Mexican empire, and sufficient to conduct them while in their accustomed course, they were altogether inadequate to a conjuncture so extraordinary, and did not qualify him either to judge with the discernment, or to act with the decision, requisite in such trying emergence.

"From the moment that the Spaniards appeared on his coast, he discovered symptoms of timidity and embarrassment. Instead of taking such resolutions as the consciousness of his own power, or the memory of his former exploits, might have inspired, he deliberated with an anxiety and hesitation which did not escape the notice of his meanest courtiers. The perplexity and discomposure of Montezuma's mind upon this occasion, as well as the general dismay of his subjects, were not owing wholly to the impression which the Spaniards had made by the novelty of their appearance and the terror of their arms. Its origin may be traced up to a more remote source. There was an opinion, if we may believe the earliest and most authentic Spanish historians, almost universal among the Americans, that some dreadful calamity was impending over their heads, from a race of formidable invaders,

who should come from regions towards the rising sun, to overrun and desolate their country. Whether this disquieting apprehension flowed from the memory of some natural calamity which had afflicted that part of the globe, and impressed the minds of the inhabitants with superstitious fears and forebodings, or whether it was an imagination accidentally suggested by the astonishment which the first sight of a new race of men occasioned, it is impossible to determine. But, as the Mexicans were more prone to superstition than any people in the new world, they were more deeply affected by the appearance of the Spaniards, whom their credulity instantly represented as the instrument destined to bring about this fatal revolution which they dreaded. Under those circumstances, it ceases to be incredible that a handful of adventurers should alarm the monarch of a great empire, and all his subjects.

" Notwithstanding the influence of this impression, when the messenger arrived from the Spanish camp with an account that the leader of the strangers, adhering to his original demand, refused to obey the order enjoining him to leave the country, Montezuma assumed some degree of resolution, and, in a transport of rage, natural to a fierce prince unaccustomed to meet with any opposition to his will, he threatened to sacrifice those presumptuous men to his gods. But his doubts and fears quickly returned, and instead of issuing orders to carry his threats into execution, he again called his ministers to confer, and offer their advice. Feeble and temporising measures will always be the result, when men assemble to deliberate in a situation where they ought to act. The Mexican counsellors took no effectual measures for expelling such troublesome intruders, and were satisfied with

issuing a more positive injunction, requiring them to leave the country; but this they preposterously accompanied with a present of such value, as proved a fresh inducement to remain there."

In the mean time, Cortes used every method to secure the affections and confidence of the soldiery, as some of the officers began to have misgivings as to the prudence and feasibleness of persisting in the enterprise. On Teutile's return with the definitive orders of Montezuma for the Spaniards to leave the country, Cortes, instead of complying, coolly renewed his request of an audience, on which the Mexican turned from him abruptly, and quitted the camp with signs of resentment.

Next morning, none of the natives, who had been accustomed to frequent the camp in great numbers to barter with the soldiers and bring provisions, made their appearance. All friendly correspondence seemed at an end; and this turn in affairs, though an event that might have been foreseen, emboldened the malecontents to cabal against the general. One of the principal officers was deputed to remonstrate with him on the imprudence of prosecuting the enterprise with so inadequate a force, and to urge the necessity of returning to Cuba. Cortes, affecting to receive the remonstrance in good part, and to give way to the wishes of the army, issued orders that they should hold themselves in readiness to re-imbark the next day. As he had anticipated, the order was received by the soldiery with surprise and indignation; the ferment became general, and they demanded to see their leader. Cortes was not backward in appearing, and assured them that he had acted from a persuasion that it was their wish to abandon the enterprise; that now he was convinced he had been misinformed; and as he perceived

that they were animated with the spirit of true and loyal Spaniards, he would resume, with fresh ardour, his original plan of operation. For his own part, he was bent on immediately establishing a settlement on the coast, and on then endeavouring to penetrate into the interior; but he would have none for soldiers but volunteers, and he offered to provide vessels for all who thought fit to return to Cuba. Shouts of applause followed this declaration, and the malecontents joined in the acclamations.

Without allowing his men time to cool, Cortes set about carrying his design into execution. He assembled the chief persons in the army, and, by their suffrage, elected a council and magistrates in whom the government was to be vested, the instrument being framed in the king's name, without any mention of the governor of Cuba. The infant settlement received a name which, as Robertson remarks, the two principles of avarice and enthusiasm by which the Spaniards were prompted in all their enterprises, seem to have concurred in suggesting. Cortes called it *Villa Rica de la Vera Cruz*, the rich town of the true cross.*

To this new council of his own creation, Cortes formally resigned the commission he had received from Velasquez, the governor of Cuba, which had long been revoked; and he was now re-appointed captain-general and supreme magistrate of the colony in the king's name. With his new command he assumed greater dignity; and when the adherents of Velasquez exclaimed against these proceedings as illegal, he arrested three of the ringleaders, and sent them prisoners aboard the ships, loaded with chains. His end being

* The latter part of the title was chosen in commemoration of their having landed on Good Friday.

answered by the intimidation this decisive exercise of power produced, he suffered himself to be pacified after a few days, and he had the address to attach the culprits most firmly to his interests.

While affairs were in this position, a most fortunate event occurred. A deputation arrived at the camp with a proffer of friendship from the *cazique* of Zempoalla, a considerable town at no great distance, who, impatient of the Mexican yoke, caught at the prospect of deliverance afforded by the arrival of these mighty strangers. This intelligence was most welcome, as it shewed that the empire which they were about to invade was not a united one. Cortes dismissed the Indians with presents, and promised soon to visit their cazique. Zempoalla lay in the way to a village called Quiabislan, (properly Chiahuitzla,) about forty miles to the northward, which some officers whom Cortes had sent to survey the coast, had reported to be a more advantageous position for the settlement. Thither he determined to march, and the ships set sail for the same point. From the cazique of Zempoalla, by whom he was received in the most friendly and respectful manner, Cortes learned further particulars concerning the character of Montezuma.* He was a tyrant, the cazique told him, haughty, cruel, and suspicious, who treated his own subjects with arrogance, and ruined the conquered provinces by his extortions, often tearing from them their sons and daughters, the former to be offered as victims to his gods, the latter to be

* The town of Zempoalla is described as consisting of stone buildings covered with a sort of lime or plaster very white and shining, "which made a pleasing and noble view at a distance, insomuch that one of the scouts returned in haste, crying aloud, that the walls were of silver, which mistake made much sport in the army; and perhaps," adds De Solis, "some did then believe it, who afterwards made a jest of his credulity."

reserved as concubines for himself and his favourites. Cortes, in reply, artfully insinuated, that one great object of his arrival in that remote country was, to relieve the oppressed, and encouraged the hope of his powerful interposition in due time. He then continued his march to Quiabislan. The cazique of that place was equally well disposed towards the strangers, and, by his friendly aid, a town of huts, surrounded with mud-walls, was commenced on the spot selected by the officers. Every man in the army put his hand to the work, and this petty station, the parent of so many mighty settlements, was soon in a respectable state of defence against an Indian enemy. While thus occupied, some of Montezuma's officers arrived to demand, in addition to the usual tribute from the caziques, twenty Indians as a sacrifice to the gods, in expiation of their crime in presuming to hold intercourse with the strangers whom the emperor had commanded to leave his dominions. At the instigation of Cortes, these officers were seized and thrown into prison, and would have been put to death by the caziques, but for his interposition. Unwilling absolutely to break with Montezuma, he secretly released two of them, and sent them away by night with an amicable message to their master, making a merit of giving them their liberty. The caziques having now been pushed on to an act of open rebellion, had no hope of safety but in attaching themselves to their new allies, and formally acknowledged themselves vassals of the King of Castile. Their example was followed by the Totonaques, a tribe of fierce mountaineers, and thirty of their caziques are said to have offered their allegiance and their services.

Cortes had now been above three months in New Spain, and the time had been well improved; but he

now felt it necessary to take measures to procure the sanction of his authority and proceedings at court. He therefore directed a specious memorial to be drawn up by the council of the new colony, humbly requesting the sovereign to ratify what they had done in his name. The presentation of it was confided to two of the chief magistrates, together with the richest present for the king that had hitherto been transmitted from the New World, consisting of all the treasures that had been collected. While a vessel was preparing for their departure, a plot was formed by some of the disaffected, to seize one of the brigantines, and escape to Cuba, in time to give information to Velasquez, and enable him to intercept the treasure and despatches. On the point of execution, the conspiracy was betrayed; but it served to fill Cortes with disquietude, as shewing that a latent spirit of disaffection still lurked among his troops. One bold measure presented itself to his mind, as the only expedient for preventing all similar attempts in future, and for securing himself against either conspiracy or desertion: this was to destroy his fleet. The resolution was not more remarkable than the address with which he succeeded in bringing the soldiers to adopt this measure. With universal consent, the ships were drawn ashore, and, after being stripped of their sails, rigging, and iron-work, were broken up. "Thus," remarks the historian of America, "from an effort of magnanimity to which there is nothing parallel in history,* five hundred men voluntarily consented to be shut up in a hostile country, filled with

* Justin relates of Agathocles, that having landed his army on the coast of Africa, he burnt his vessels to deprive his soldiers of the means of flight. A similar act of heroism is related of Timarchus, an Etolian general, and of Q. Fabius Maximus. But De Solis justly remarks, that the merit of Cortes is not lessened by these ancient examples.

powerful and unknown nations; and having precluded every means of escape, left themselves without any resource but their own valour and perseverance."

Previously to this transaction, Cortes had exhibited a proof of his resolute character, by what Robertson terms an indiscreet sally of religious zeal, which on many occasions precipitated him into actions inconsistent with his characteristic prudence. "Though hitherto he had had neither time nor opportunity to explain to the natives the errors of their superstition, or to instruct them in the principles of the Christian faith, he commanded his soldiers to overturn the altars, and to destroy the idols in the chief temple of Zempoalla, and in their place to erect a crucifix and an image of the Virgin Mary." The account which De Solis gives of the circumstance, redounds, however, more to the honour of Cortes. It is stated, that the cazique of Zempoalla had offered his own niece in marriage to the Spanish general, with a view to strengthen the alliance between them; but Cortes had declined the proposal, on the ground that it was not lawful for the Spaniards to take wives of a different religion, and had attempted to convince the cazique of the evil of idolatry. "At this time happened one of the most solemn festivals of their idols; and the Zempoallans assembled (not without some circumspection on account of the Spaniards) in the principal of their temples, where they celebrated a sacrifice of human blood. Afterwards, the unhappy victims were sold, cut up in pieces, which were sought after and bought as sacred food. Some Spaniards happened to see part of this slaughter, who came and told Cortes how much they were scandalised; and he was so highly provoked at it, that the motives which obliged him to keep measures with those confederates,

gave way to a greater cause." Calling the caziques to attend him, he went to the temple at the head of a body of troops. The priests, jealous of the event, met him at the gate, and began to call on the Indians to defend their gods. At the same time appeared some armed guards, whom the priests had posted in the avenues. Cortes, with his usual presence of mind, told them, that on the first arrow they should let fly, he would cause the throat of their cazique to be cut. This threat, and the command of the cazique, induced them to lay down their arms. Cortes then harangued them on the monstrous character of their idolatry, and concluded by trying to persuade them to overthrow their idols with their own hands. When they refused to do this, he ordered his soldiers to do execution upon their gods; and the principal idol, together with those on each side, were speedily tumbled down from the top of a flight of steps, and came to the pavement all broken to pieces, followed by their own altars, and the detestable instruments of their adoration. "Great was the commotion and astonishment of the Indians: they beheld each other as expecting the punishment of heaven. But it soon happened that, seeing their gods thus debased without power to revenge themselves, they laid aside all fear, and became sensible of their weakness. The Zempoallans by this experiment became more easy to be persuaded, and more submissive to the orders of the Spaniards. For, if before they considered them as men of a superior nature, they now found themselves obliged to confess that they were more powerful than their gods." Affecting to be undeceived, they afterwards burnt the fragments of their idols, and quietly attended the celebration of mass, which was performed in the temple, not, however, before the

stains of human blood had been scraped from the walls, and a covering of plaster laid on. * If the conduct of Cortes on this occasion was indiscreet, it was a noble indiscretion, and the measure seems to have been far from impolitic. At least, to have permitted the continuance of human sacrifices and cannibal practices, would have been in the highest degree discreditable to his character. What had contributed greatly to raise him in the estimation of the natives, was the arrival of a third embassy and present from Montezuma, the mighty emperor who disdained to bend his knee in the presence of his own gods: it had been sent off in consequence of the report brought by the liberated officers. Cortes received the envoys with profound respect, delivered up the remaining captives, and sent them back with presents and a polite message, in which, however, he still intimated his unshaken intention to wait upon the emperor.

On the sixteenth of August, Cortes began his march into the interior, with 500 men, 15 horse, and 16 field-pieces, besides 400 Indian warriors, furnished by the caziques, and 200 slaves. 150 men were left in garrison at Vera Cruz. The army was well received in their first marches at the towns of Jalapa, Sochochima, and Texucla. The road to Mexico then lay for three days over bare and rugged mountains, and the army underwent great suffering in the march. By the cazique of Zocothlan, they were received with a forced civility; and after halting to refresh his troops, Cortes advanced towards Tlascala. The warlike inhabitants of this province were

* De Solis, vol. i. pp. 201-6. Robertson mentions this occurrence as posterior to the burning of the ships, but De Solis (as apparently the primary authorities) relates that it took place some time before.

implacable enemies of the Mexicans; and Cortes resolved to send four of the Zempoallans to negotiate an amicable passage of the troops through their territory. But the Tlascalans resolved on opposing their progress, and, seizing the ambassadors, prepared to sacrifice them to the gods. Cortes, after waiting some days for their return, advanced with caution, and had soon to sustain a fierce encounter with the natives, in which two soldiers and five horses were wounded. The next day, they came in sight of the main army, consisting, the Spanish historians tell us, of above 40,000 men,* who were repulsed with great slaughter, at the cost of nine or ten Spaniards wounded, and some Indians killed, and with the loss of another horse, whose head was borne off in triumph by the Tlascalans as a trophy. In a third engagement, in which the enemy brought 50,000 men into the field, the Spaniards, though thrown into disorder, lost only one soldier, but had

* No circumstance in the history of the conquest of Mexico, Dr. Robertson remarks, is more questionable than the account of the numerous armies brought into the field against the Spaniards. Cortes himself states the number of the Tlascalans in the first battle at 6000; in the second battle, 100,000; in the third, 150,000. Gomara, his chaplain after his return to Spain, follows, with a slight variation, this monstrous estimate. But Bernal Diaz, an eye-witness, with somewhat more modesty, reduces these numbers to 3000, 6000, and 50,000. Still, the disparity is left so great, that the inconsiderable loss of the Spaniards can be rendered credible, only by taking into account the imperfection of the offensive weapons employed against them, their admirable defensive armour, consisting of quilted jackets and bucklers, the terror spread by their fire-arms and horses, and the anxiety manifested in the heat of battle by the Indians to carry off their dead, to prevent their being devoured. After they had discovered the horse and his rider to be distinct, they still believed that the horses devoured men in battle, and, when they neighed, thought that they were asking for their prey.

twenty wounded, while the Tlascalans had great numbers slain. They now began to consider these strangers as either divinities or magicians, and the priests were consulted as to the best means of overcoming their spells. The oracle delivered this response: That the strangers were the offspring of the sun; that by day, therefore, they were invincible, but, when his parental influence was withdrawn, they would be found disheartened and feeble. On receiving this welcome information, Xicotental, the Tlascalan general, resolved on attacking them with a strong body, after sunset. The Spanish centinels were, however, on the alert, and the powerful and unlooked-for resistance which the assailants met with, convinced them that their priests had deluded them, and increased their awe of the Spaniards. Though repulsed with great loss, they yet meditated a second night attack, and forty Indians, disguised as peasants, with provisions, were sent to examine the Spanish entrenchments; but these spies were detected by the Zempoallans, and Cortes sent them back with their hands cut off, or mutilated, to tell Xicotental that he was waiting for him. The apparent power of divination which had led to the discovery, together with the dismay produced by this act of severity, decided the Tlascalans on suing for peace. Their proposals were not unwelcome to Cortes and his army, to whom a suspension of hostilities had become, indeed, necessary. Many were wounded, and others, among whom was Cortes himself, laboured under distempers brought on by the climate, of which several had died since they set out. Notwithstanding the supplies which they obtained from the Tlascalans, they were often in want of provisions, as well as of other necessaries; and they are stated to have had no salve to dress their

wounds, but what was composed of the fat of the Indians whom they had slain. Worn out with intolerable hardships, many of the soldiers began to murmur, and more were ready to despair. But the submission of the Tlascalans, followed by their own triumphant entry into the city, where they were received with the reverence paid to beings of a superior order, banished at once from the minds of the Spaniards all memory of past sufferings, and inspired them with the conviction that there was not any power in America able to withstand their arms. They entered Tlascala on the 23d of September, 1519.

Cortes remained here twenty days, to allow his troops an interval of repose, during which he so far gained the confidence of the natives, that they readily engaged to accompany him in his march to Mexico. But his religious zeal had again well nigh precipitated him into fresh hostilities. In a conference which he held with some of their chiefs on the subject of their idolatrous rites, he had brought them to consent to discontinue their human sacrifices, and to set at liberty the captives who were being fattened for the next festival; but the Tlascalans begged that he would speak no more of their changing their religion, lest the gods should punish them for listening to the impious proposal. Cortes, enraged at their obstinacy, or presuming upon the success of his bold experiment at Zempoalla, proposed to his men to attack the idols; "as if," says De Solis, "it had been the same thing to undertake such an affair in a town that was so much better peopled. But Father Bartolome de Olmedo (the chaplain to the expedition) soon brought him to reason, telling him, with a resolution becoming his character, "That he was not without some scruples concerning the

violence offered to the people of Zempoalla; that persecution and the gospel did ill agree; and that, in effect, it would only overturn their altars, and leave the idols in their hearts; that before the worship of God could be introduced, the devil must be banished—a war of a different kind, and which required a different sort of arms.'" Cortes deferred to the authority of the ecclesiastic, and restrained, for this time, his impetuous zeal, satisfying himself with the promises of the Tlascalans to desist from offering human victims.*

At length, the troops being fit for service, Cortes resolved to continue his march towards Mexico. Montezuma had meanwhile consented to admit the Spaniards into his presence, and his envoys had informed Cortes, that quarters would be provided for him at Cholula, through which his road lay. This town, which the Tlascalans had strongly advised him to avoid, was the holy city of the Mexicans, the chief seat of their gods, to which pilgrims resorted from every province, and a greater number of human victims were offered in its principal temple, than even in that of Mexico. Cortes himself says, that he counted above four hundred temple-towers. Montezuma seems to have invited the Spaniards thither, either from some superstitious hope that the gods would not suffer this their sanctuary to be violated, without pouring down their wrath on the impious intruders, or from a belief that he could there cut them off with more certain success, under the immediate protection of his divinities. Cortes, being now joined by 6000 Tlascalans, found himself at the head of a considerable army. He was

* Dr. Robertson remarks on this incident: "One is astonished to find a Spanish monk of the sixteenth century among the first advocates against persecution, and in favour of religious liberty."

received, with his Spaniards, into Cholula, with much apparent cordiality;* but the Tlascalans were not allowed to enter the town, being enemies of the Mexican nation. Several suspicious circumstances had caught the vigilant attention of Cortes, but he found it prudent to dissemble his distrust. The situation in which he had placed himself was, indeed, most critical; but the singular good fortune which attended him throughout this most extraordinary enterprise, again saved him. Donna Marina received information from an Indian woman of distinction, whose confidence she had gained, that the destruction of her friends was concerted; that a body of Mexican troops lay concealed in the town; that some of the streets were barricadoed, and in others pits or deep trenches had been dug, and slightly covered over, as traps for the horses; that large quantities of stones were collected

* An old translation of Gomara's History, cited in the notes to "Madoc," gives the following description of their entrance into this city: — "The nexte day, in the morning, the Spaniards came to Chololla, and there came out near ten thousand Indians to receyve him, with their captaynes, in good order. Many of them presented unto him bread, foules, and roses; and every captayne, as he approached, welcomed Cortes, and then stood aside, that the rest in order mighte come unto him; and when he came entering into the citie, all the other citizens receyved him, marvelling to see such men and horses. After all this came out all the religious menne, as priests and ministers to the idols, who were many and straunge to behold, and all were clothed in white, lyke unto surplices, and hemmed with common threede. Some brought instruments of musicke like unto cornettes, others brought instruments made of bones; others an instrument like a ketel covered with skin; some brought chafing-dishes of coals with perfumes; others brought idols covered; and finally, they all came singing in their language, which was a terrible noyse, and drew neere Cortes and his company, sensing them with sweete smelles in their sensers. With this pomp and solemnitie, which truely was great, they brought him into the citie."

on the tops of the temples and houses; and that the fatal hour was now at hand. Scarcely had Cortes received this intelligence, when two of the Tlascalans, who had found means to enter the city in disguise, brought word from their chiefs, that they had observed the women and children retiring by night into the neighbouring villages, and that ten children had been sacrificed in the chief temple; a rite which certainly indicated the approaching execution of some military enterprise. Not a moment was to be lost. Cortes secretly arrested three of the chief priests, from whom he extorted a confession which confirmed this intelligence. Orders were then given to the Tlascalans to draw near the city by day-break, and at the first discharge of fire-arms, to enter it with all speed. The Spaniards and the Zempoallans were drawn up under arms in a large court which had been allotted for their quarters, near the centre of the town. As soon as it was day, Cortes sent for the magistrates and chief citizens, and reproached them with their treachery. Before they could recover from their confusion, the signal being given, his troops rushed out on the Mexicans, and at the same time the Tlascalans closed with their rear. The streets were filled with carnage. The temples, in which the priests and some of the principal citizens took refuge, were set on fire, and they all perished in the flames. This scene of horror continued two days, during which the city was pillaged by the Tlascalans; and above six thousand Cholulans fell in the massacre, without the loss of a single Spaniard. "In truth," says De Solis, "it was a chastisement, rather than a victory." At length, orders were issued to put a stop to the carnage, and Cortes, commanding the magistrates and priests whom he had imprisoned to be brought into his presence, told them that, as justice

was appeased, he forgave their crime; and he required them to recal the fugitives, and re-establish order in the city. Scarcely able to believe that they were at liberty, they kissed the earth in acknowledgment of his clemency; and such was the ascendancy which Cortes had now acquired over their minds, that the tumult was at once converted into obedience and security. The city was in a few days repeopled; the traders again displayed their wares, and amid the ruins of their sacred buildings, the Cholulans yielded respectful service to men whose hands were stained with the blood of their relatives and fellow-citizens. Cortes succeeded also in establishing a treaty of peace and alliance between the two hostile cities of Tlascala and Cholula.

On the 29th of October, Cortes advanced towards Mexico, distant twenty leagues. In every place through which he passed, he was received with the homage due to a superior being, and every where complaints were made to him of the tyranny under which the country groaned. In descending from the mountains of Chalco, the vast plain of Mexico opened to their view. "When they first beheld this prospect, one of the most striking and beautiful on the face of the earth; when they observed fertile and cultivated fields stretching further than the eye could reach; when they saw a lake resembling the sea in extent, encompassed with large towns, and discovered the capital city rising upon an island in the middle, adorned with its temples and turrets; the scene so far exceeded their imagination, that some believed the fanciful descriptions of romance were realised, and that its enchanted palaces and gilded domes were presented to their sight; others could hardly persuade themselves that this wonderful spectacle was any thing more than a dream. As they

advanced, their doubts were removed, but their amazement increased. They were now fully satisfied, that the country was rich beyond any conception which they had formed of it, and flattered themselves, that at length they should obtain an ample recompense for all their services and sufferings.

"Hitherto they had met with no enemy to oppose their progress, though several circumstances occurred, which led them to suspect that some design was formed to surprise and cut them off. Many messengers arrived successively from Montezuma, permitting them one day to advance, requiring them on the next to retire, as his hopes or fears alternately prevailed; and so wonderful was this infatuation, which seems to be unaccountable on any supposition but that of a superstitious dread of the Spaniards as beings of a superior nature, that Cortes was almost at the gates of the capital, before the monarch had determined whether to receive him as a friend, or to oppose him as an enemy. But, as no sign of open hostility appeared, the Spaniards, without regarding the fluctuations of Montezuma's sentiments, continued their march along the causeway which led to Mexico through the lake, with great circumspection and the strictest discipline, though without seeming to suspect the prince whom they were about to visit.

"When they drew near the city, about a thousand persons, who appeared to be of distinction, came forth to meet them, adorned with plumes, and clad in mantles of fine cotton. Each of these in his order passed by Cortes, and saluted him according to the mode deemed most respectful and submissive in their country. They announced the approach of Montezuma himself, and soon after his harbingers came in sight. There appeared first, two hundred persons in

a uniform dress, with large plumes of feathers, alike in fashion, marching two and two, in deep silence, barefooted, with their eyes fixed on the ground. These were followed by a company of higher rank, in their most showy apparel, in the midst of whom was Montezuma, in a chair or litter richly ornamented with gold, and feathers of various colours. Four of his principal favourites carried him on their shoulders; others supported a canopy of curious workmanship over his head. Before him marched three officers with rods of gold in their hands, which they lifted up on high at certain intervals, and at that signal all the people bowed their heads, and hid their faces, as unworthy to look on so great a monarch. When he drew near, Cortes dismounted, advancing towards him with officious haste, and in a respectful posture. At the same time, Montezuma alighted from his chair, and, leaning on the arms of two of his near relations, approached with a slow and stately pace, his attendants covering the street with cotton cloths, that he might not touch the ground. Cortes accosted him with profound reverence, after the European fashion. He returned the salutation according to the mode of his country, by touching the earth with his hand, and then kissing it. This ceremony, the customary expression of veneration from inferiors towards those who were above them in rank, appeared such amazing condescension in a proud monarch, who scarcely deigned to consider the rest of mankind as of the same species with himself, that all his subjects firmly believed those persons, before whom he humbled himself in this manner, to be something more than human. Accordingly, as they marched through the crowd, the Spaniards frequently, and with much satisfaction, heard themselves denominated *Teules*, or divinities.

Nothing material passed in this first interview. Montezuma conducted Cortes to the quarters which he had prepared for his reception, and immediately took leave of him, with a politeness not unworthy of a court more refined. 'You are now,' says he, 'with your brothers in your own house; refresh yourselves after your fatigue, and be happy until I return.' The place allotted to the Spaniards for their lodging, was a house built by the father of Montezuma. It was surrounded by a stone wall, with towers at proper distances, which served for defence as well as for ornament; and its apartment and courts were so large, as to accommodate both the Spaniards and their Indian allies. The first care of Cortes was to take precautions for his security, by planting the artillery so as to command the different avenues which led to it, by appointing a large division of his troops to be always on guard, and by posting sentinels at proper stations, with injunctions to observe the same vigilant discipline as if they were within sight of an enemy's camp.

"In the evening, Montezuma returned to visit his guests, with the same pomp as in their first interview, and brought presents of such value, not only to Cortes and to his officers, but even to the private men, as proved the liberality of the monarch to be suitable to the opulence of his kingdom. A long conference ensued, in which Cortes learned what was the opinion of Montezuma with respect to the Spaniards. It was an established tradition, he told him, among the Mexicans, that their ancestors came originally from a remote region, and conquered the provinces now subject to his dominion; that after they were settled there, the great captain who conducted this colony, returned to his own country, promising that at some

future period his descendants should visit them, assume the government, and reform their constitution and laws; that, from what he had heard and seen of Cortes and his followers, he was convinced that they were the very persons whose appearance the Mexican traditions and prophecies taught them to expect; that accordingly he had received them, not as strangers, but as relations of the same blood and parentage, and desired that they might consider themselves as masters in his dominions; for both himself and his subjects should be ready to comply with their will, and even to prevent their wishes. Cortes made a reply in his usual style, with respect to the dignity and power of his sovereign, and his intention in sending him into that country; artfully endeavouring so to frame his discourse, that it might coincide as much as possible with the idea which Montezuma had formed concerning the origin of the Spaniards. Next morning, Cortes and some of his principal attendants were admitted to a public audience of the emperor. The three subsequent days were employed in viewing the city; the appearance of which, so far superior in the order of its buildings, and the number of its inhabitants, to any place the Spaniards had beheld in America, and yet so little resembling the structure of an European city, filled them with surprize and admiration."*

The capital of Montezuma,† the proper name of which was Tenochtitlan, was built on a group of islands in the midst of a lake which, at that period, occupied a considerable part of the valley of Mexico. It was founded in 1325. Its appearance in 1520 is thus described by Cortes himself, in a letter to the

* Robertson's America, book v.

† His true Mexican name was Moteuczoma.

Emperor Charles V.: "The province in which the residence of this great lord, Muteczuma, is situated, is circularly surrounded with elevated mountains, and intersected with precipices. The plain contains near seventy leagues in circumference, and in this plain are two lakes which fill nearly the whole valley; for the inhabitants sail in canoes for more than fifty leagues round. Of the two great lakes of the valley of Mexico, the one is fresh, and the other salt water. They are separated by a small range of mountains" (the conical and insulated hills near Iztapalapan); "these mountains rise in the middle of the plain, and the waters of the lakes mingle together in a strait between the hills and the high Cordillera" (undoubtedly the eastern declivity of Cerros de Santa Fe). "The numerous towns and villages constructed in both of the two lakes* carry on their commerce by canoes, without touching the continent. The great city of Temixtitan† (Tenochtitlan) is situated in the midst of the salt-water lake, which has its tides like the sea; and from the city to the continent there are two leagues, whichever way we wish to enter. Four dikes lead to the city: they are made by the hand of man, and are of the breadth of two lances. The city is as large as Seville or Cordova. The streets, I merely speak of the principal ones, are very narrow and very large; some are half dry and half occupied by navigable

* The general speaks only of two lakes, because he knew but imperfectly those of Zumpango and Xaltocan, between which he hastily passed in his flight from Mexico to Tlascala before the battle of Otumba.

† Temistitan, Temixtitan, Tenoxtitlan, Temihtitlan, are all corruptions of the true name of Tenochtitlan. The Aztecs, or Mexicans, called themselves also *Tenochques*, whence the denomination of their capital is derived.

canals, furnished with very well-constructed wooden bridges, broad enough for ten men on horseback to pass at the same time. The market-place, twice as large as that of Seville, is surrounded with an immense portico, under which are exposed for sale all sorts of merchandise, eatables, ornaments made of gold, silver, lead, pewter, precious stones, bones, shells, and feathers; delft ware, leather, and spun cotton. We find hewn stone, tiles, and timber fit for building. There are lanes for game, others for roots and garden fruits; there are houses where barbers shave the head (with razors made of obsidian); and there are houses resembling our apothecary shops, where prepared medicines, unguents, and plasters are sold. The market abounds with so many things, that I am unable to name them all to your highness. To avoid confusion, every species of merchandise is sold in a separate lane; every thing is sold by the yard; but nothing has hitherto been seen to be weighed in the market. In the midst of the great square is a house which I shall call l'Audiencia, in which ten or twelve persons sit constantly for determining any disputes which may arise respecting the sale of goods. There are other persons who mix continually with the crowd, to see that a just price is asked. We have seen them break the false measures which they had seized from the merchants."

The access to the city from the continent was by three great dikes or causeways, formed of stones and earth, about thirty feet in breadth. That of Tlapocan (Tacuba), on the west, extended a mile and a half; that of Tepeyacac, on the north-west, three miles; that of Coyohuacan (or Iztapalapan), on the south, six miles. On the east there was no causeway, owing to the great depth of the lake in that direction, and the

city could be approached only by canoes. In each of these causeways were openings at proper intervals, through which the waters flowed; and over these were laid beams of timber covered with earth. The city was divided into four quarters, called Teopan or Xochimilca, Atzacualco, Moyotla, and Tlaguechiuchan or Cuepopan. The old division is still preserved in the limits assigned to the quarters of St. Paul, St. Sebastian, St. John, and St. Mary. "Adorned with numerous temples, the summits of which resembled so many minarets, surrounded with water and dikes, founded on islands covered with verdure, and receiving hourly in its streets thousands of boats, which gave life to the lake, the ancient Tenochtitlan, according to the accounts of the first conquerors, must have resembled some of the cities of Holland, China, or the Delta of Lower Egypt." The enormous magnitude of the market-place, the boundaries of which are still discernible, proves the great population of the ancient city. From forty to fifty thousand persons are stated to have assembled there. The Indians shew here an elevation surrounded by walls, the site of one of the Mexican theatres, on which Cortes erected his famous catapulta a few days before the end of the siege. The *Teocalli*, or great temple of Mexitli, was a truncated pyramid 120 feet high, and 318 feet square at its base, situated in the midst of a vast enclosure of walls, and consisting of five stories, like some of the pyramids of Saccara. When seen from a distance, it appeared an enormous cube, with small altars, covered with wooden cupolas, on the top. The point where these cupolas terminated, was 177 feet above the pavement of the enclosure. The material of which the pyramid was built, is supposed to have been clay, faced with a porous stone resembling

pumice-stone, hard and smooth, but easily destructible.* The public buildings and houses of the nobles

* Humboldt considers the *Teocalli* as bearing a strong resemblance in form to the mausoleum of Belus, which was only a pyramid, dedicated to Jupiter Belus. All the edifices consecrated to Mexican divinities were truncated pyramids, which class with the pyramidal monuments and tumuli of Asia. Robertson calls the temple of Mexitli, "a solid mass of earth of a square form, partly faced with stone," and observes, that "such structures convey no high idea of progress in art and ingenuity." This may be true; but the analogy they present to the primitive monuments of other nations, is not the less interesting. De Solis gives the following description of this edifice, on the authority chiefly of Acosta:—"The first part of the building was a great square, with a wall of hewn stone, wrought on the outside with various knots of serpents intertwisted, which gave a horror to the portico, and were not improperly placed there. At a little distance from the principal gate was a place of worship, not less terrible: it was built of stone, with thirty steps of the same, which went up to the top, where was a kind of long flat roof, and a great many trunks of well-grown trees fixed in it, in a row, with holes bored in them at equal distances, and through which, from one tree to another, passed several bars run through the heads of men who had been sacrificed, of whose number (which cannot be repeated without horror) the priests of the temple took exact account, placing others in the room of those which had been wasted by time. A lamentable trophy, in which the enemy of mankind displayed his rancour, and which these barbarians always had in view, without the least remorse! for inhumanity put on the mask of devotion, and custom had rendered death in all its terrors familiar to their eyes. The four sides of the square had as many gates opening to the four winds. Over each of these gates were four statues of stone, which seemed to point the way, as if they were desirous to send back such as approached with an ill disposition of mind. These were presumed to be threshold gods, because they had some reverences paid them at the entrance. Close to the inside of the wall, were the habitations of the priests, and of those who, under them, attended the service of the temple, with some offices; which altogether took up the whole circumference, without retrenching so much from that vast square, but that eight or ten thousand persons had sufficient room to dance in it upon their solemn festivals. In the centre of this square stood a pile of stone, which in the open air exalted its lofty head, overlooking all the towers of the city,

were of stone; those of the common people were mere

gradually diminishing till it formed a half pyramid; three of its sides were smooth, the fourth had stairs wrought in the stone; a sumptuous building, and extremely well proportioned. It was so high that the stair-case contained a hundred and twenty steps, and of so large a compass, that on the top it terminated in a flat forty feet square: the pavement was beautifully laid with jasper stones of all colours: the rails, which went round in nature of a balustrade, were of a serpentine form, and both sides covered with stones resembling jet, placed in good order, and joined with white and red cement, which was a very great ornament to the building. On the opening of the rails, where the stairs ended, were two marble statues, which supported, in a manner that admirably well expressed the straining of the arms, two huge candlesticks of an extraordinary make. A little further was a green stone, five spans high from the ground, which terminated in an angle, and whereon they extended on his back the miserable victim they were about to sacrifice, and opened his breast to take out his heart. Beyond this stone, fronting the staircase, stood a chapel of excellent workmanship and materials, covered with a roof of precious timber. Here the idol was placed on a high altar, behind curtains: it was of human figure, sitting in a chair which had some resemblance of a throne, sustained by a blue globe, which they called heaven, from the sides whereof came four rods, with their ends resembling the heads of serpents, which the priests placed upon their shoulders, when they exposed their idol to public view. It had on its head a helm composed of plumes of various colours, in form of a bird, with a bill and crest of burnished gold: its countenance was severe and horrible, and still more deformed with two blue bands, which bound its forehead and its nose. In the right hand it held a curling serpent, which served for a staff, and in the left, four arrows, which they venerated as a present from heaven, and a shield with five white plumes placed in the form of a cross: and concerning these ornaments, these ensigns and colours, they related many remarkable extravagances, with a seriousness deserving to be pitied. On the left hand of this chapel was another of the same make and bigness, with an idol called Tlaloch, in every respect resembling his companion. They were esteemed brothers and friends to such a degree, that they divided between them the patronage of war, equal in power, and unanimous in inclination; for which reasons the Mexicans addressed them both with the same prayers, the same sacrifices, and the same thanksgivings. The ornaments of both chapels were of inestimable value; the walls were hung, and the altars covered with jewels and precious stones, placed on

huts, but regularly disposed.* The population is variously stated: De Solis makes it amount to 60,000 families. Other estimates carry the number up to a million and a half of inhabitants.†

At the period of Cortes's expedition, the Mexican empire had subsisted for only about 130 years. According to the native annals, the Aztec emigration

feathers of various colours: and they had eight temples in the city of almost the same architecture, and of equal wealth. Those of a smaller size amounted to two thousand, and were dedicated to as many idols, of different names, forms, and attributes. There was scarce a street without its tutelar deity; nor was there any calamity incident to nature without its altar, to which they might have recourse for a remedy. In a word, their gods were derived from their fears; nor did they reflect how they lessened the power of some by what they attributed to others. Thus did the devil continually enlarge his dominion, and exercise a most deplorable tyranny over rational creatures, in the possession of which he remained for so many ages, by the incomprehensible permission of the Most High."

* "The low houses," says Humboldt, "like those of Pekin and China, were partly constructed of wood, and partly of *tetzontli*, a spongy stone, light and easily broken. The palace of Montezuma occupied the very same site on which at present stands the hotel of the Duke de Monteleone, vulgarly called *Casa del Estado*, in the *Plaza Mayor*. This palace, like those of the Emperor of China, described by Sir G. Staunton and Mr. Barrow, were composed of a great number of spacious, but very low houses." The edifice in which Cortes and his little army were lodged, had formerly been the palace of King Axajacatl. "It was probably," adds Humboldt, "a vast enclosure, which contained several edifices; for nearly 7000 men were quartered there. The ruins of the city of Mansiche, in Peru, give us a clear idea of this species of American construction. Every habitation of a great lord formed a separate district, in which the courts, streets, walls, and ditches were distinguished. We still perceive inconsiderable remains of these quarters of the Spaniards, in the ruins behind the convent of Sta. Theresa, at the corner of the streets of Tacuba and del Indio Triste."—*Pol. Essay*, vol. ii. pp. 43, 53, 55.

† Robertson says, "at least 60,000 inhabitants."—See Humboldt's Political Essay, vol. ii. pp. 8—22, and 60; Robertson's America, book v.; De Solis, vol. i. book iii. chap. 13.

from Aztlan took place about A.D. 1160; but they did not reach the Vale of Mexico till 1216. For another hundred years, they remained an inconsiderable tribe in a state of subjection. The city of Tenochtitlan was founded in 1325. Up to 1352, the Mexicans were governed by a species of aristocracy; but a monarch was then elected, whose whole dominions, however, were comprehended in the city. At his death, in 1389, his son was chosen his successor. Montezuma I., the fifth monarch, was the greatest conqueror of which they could boast: he successively defeated a number of the petty sovereigns of the surrounding districts, and annexed their territories to his empire. He began to reign in 1436. In the reign of Ahuitzotl, the eighth king, and the immediate predecessor of Montezuma II., the Mexican empire reached its utmost extent. He completed the great temple which had been begun by his brother Tizoc; and so great was the number of workmen employed, that it was finished in four years. During the time that the building was going forward, the king employed himself in making war upon different nations, reserving all his prisoners for victims to solemnise the dedication of his infernal temple. The number sacrificed on that occasion (A.D. 1486) is stated by Torquemada at 72,324; by other historians at 64,000. The same year, another temple, built by a feudatory lord, was dedicated with the sacrifice of a vast number of prisoners.* Montezuma II., surnamed *Xocojotzin*, (i.e. the younger, to distinguish him from Montezuma *Huehue*, or the elder,) acceded to the

* It is a remarkable coincidence, that the Inquisition, in its modern form, was established in Spain about this same period (1481). Torquemada, the first inquisitor-general, was appointed in 1483. The total of his victims, during the eighteen years of his administration, was more than 10,000 committed to the flames,

throne by unanimous election in 1502. He was esteemed a person of great bravery, and was likewise a priest. His first care was, to procure victims for the barbarous sacrifices to be made at his coronation, by making war upon the people of Atlixco; and the ceremony was performed with greater pomp than had ever before been witnessed in Mexico. No sooner was it over, than he began to display the pride and arrogance of his natural temper, which he had hitherto artfully concealed under a show of extraordinary modesty and austere gravity. The first action by which he manifested his pride, was the discarding of all the officers and attendants of the royal household, as of too low a rank to serve him; and he would have none but nobles to perform even the most menial offices. "Besides those who constantly lived in it, every morning six hundred feudatory lords and nobles came to pay court to him. They passed the whole day in the antechamber, where none of their servants were permitted to enter, conversing in a low voice, and waiting the orders of their sovereign. The servants who accompanied those lords were so numerous as to occupy three small courts of the palace, and many waited in the streets. The women about the court were not less in number, including those of rank, servants, and slaves. All this numerous female tribe lived shut up in a kind of seraglio, under the care of some noble matrons, who watched over their conduct; as these kings were extremely jealous, and every piece of misconduct which happened in the palace, however slight, was severely

nearly 7000 burnt in effigy, and upwards of 97,000 sentenced to confiscation, perpetual imprisonment, or infamy. During the forty-three years of the administration of the first four inquisitors-general, it is calculated that above 18,000 were burnt in person, and more than 200,000 were subjected to various penances.

punished. Of these women, the king retained those who pleased him; the others he gave away, as a recompense for the services of his vassals. All the feudatories of the crown were obliged to reside for some months of the year at the court; and, at their return to their states, to leave their sons or brothers behind them, as hostages, which the king demanded as a security for their fidelity; on which account they were required to keep houses in Mexico.

" The forms and ceremonials introduced at court, were another effect of the despotism of Montezuma. No one could enter the palace, either to serve the king, or to confer with him on any business, without pulling off his shoes and stockings at the gate. No person was allowed to appear before the king in any pompous dress, as it was deemed a want of respect to majesty; consequently, the greatest lords, excepting the nearest relations of the king, stripped themselves of the rich dress which they wore, or at least covered it with one more ordinary, to shew their humility before him. All persons, on entering the hall of audience, and before speaking to the king, made three bows, saying at the first, lord; at the second, my lord; and at the third, great lord. They spoke low, and with the head inclined, and received the answer which the king gave them, by means of his secretaries, as attentively and humbly as if it had been the voice of an oracle. In taking leave, no person ever turned his back upon the throne.

" The audience-hall served also for his dining-room. The table was a large pillow, and his seat a low chair. The table-cloth, napkins, and towels were of cotton, but very fine, white, and always perfectly clean. The kitchen utensils were of the earthenware of Chollula; but none of these things ever served him more than

once, as immediately afterwards, he gave them to one of his nobles. The cups in which they prepared his chocolate and other drinks of the cocoa, were of gold, or some beautiful sea-shell, or naturally formed vessels curiously varnished, of which we shall speak hereafter. He had gold plate, but it was used only on certain festivals, in the temple. The number and variety of dishes at his table amazed the Spaniards who saw them. The conqueror Cortez says, that they covered the floor of a great hall, and that there were dishes of every kind of game, fish, fruit, and herbs of that country. Three or four hundred noble youths carried this dinner in form; presented it as soon as the king sat down to table, and immediately retired; and, that it might not grow cold, every dish was accompanied with its chafing-dish. The king marked, with a rod which he had in his hand, the meats which he chose, and the rest were distributed among the nobles who were in the antechamber. Before he sat down, four of the most beautiful women of his seraglio presented water to him to wash his hands, and continued standing all the time of his dinner, together with six of his principal ministers, and his carver.

"As soon as the king sat down to table, the carver shut the door of the hall, that none of the other nobles might see him eat. The ministers stood at a distance, and kept a profound silence, unless when they made answer to what the king said. The carver and the four women served the dishes to him, besides two others who brought him bread made of maize baked with eggs. He frequently heard music during the time of his meal, and was entertained with the humorous sayings of some deformed men whom he kept out of mere state. He shewed much satisfaction in hearing them, and observed that, amongst their jests, they frequently

pronounced some important truth. When his dinner was over, he took tobacco mixed with liquid amber, in a pipe or reed beautifully varnished, and with the smoke of it put himself to sleep.

" After having slept a little, upon the same low chair, he gave audience, and listened attentively to all that was communicated to him, and answered every one by his ministers or secretaries. After giving audience, he was entertained with music, being much delighted with hearing the glorious actions of his ancestors sung. At other times he amused himself with seeing various games played. When he went abroad, he was carried on the shoulders of the nobles in a litter covered with a rich canopy, attended by a numerous retinue of courtiers; and wherever he passed, every person stopped with their eyes shut, as if they feared to be dazzled with the splendour of majesty. When he alighted from the litter, to walk on foot, they spread carpets, that he might not touch the earth with his feet.

" The grandeur and magnificence of his palaces, houses of pleasure, woods, and gardens, were correspondent to this majesty. The palace of his usual residence was a vast edifice of stone and lime, which had twenty doors to the public squares and streets; three great courts, in one of which was a beautiful fountain; several halls, and more than a hundred chambers. Some of the apartments had walls of marble and other valuable kinds of stone. The beams were of cedar, cypress, and other excellent woods, well finished and carved. Among the halls there was one so large that, according to the testimony of an eye-witness of veracity, it could contain three thousand people. Besides this palace he had others, both within and without the capital. In Mexico, besides the

seraglio for his wives, there was lodging for all his ministers and counsellors, and all the officers of his household and court; and also accommodation for foreign lords who arrived there, and particularly for the two allied kings.

"Two houses in Mexico he appropriated to animals; the one for birds which did not live by prey; the other for those of prey, quadrupeds, and reptiles. There were several chambers belonging to the first, and galleries supported on pillars of marble all of one piece. These galleries looked towards a garden, where, in the midst of some shrubbery, ten fish-ponds were formed, some of them of fresh water for the aquatic birds of rivers, and others of salt water for those of the sea. In other parts of the house were all sorts of birds, in such manner and variety as to strike the Spaniards with wonder, who could not believe there was any species in the world wanting to the collection. They were supplied with the same food which they fed upon while they enjoyed their liberty, whether seeds, fruits, or insects. For those birds who lived on fish only, the daily consumption was ten Castilian *pesos* of fish, (according to the testimony of the conqueror Cortez, in his letters to Charles V.,) which is more than three hundred Roman pounds. Three hundred men, says Cortez, were employed to take care of those birds, besides their physicians, who observed their distempers and applied timely remedies to them. Of those three hundred men, some procured them their food, others distributed it, others took care of their eggs at the time of their incubation, and others picked their plumage at certain seasons of the year; for, besides the pleasure which the king took in seeing so great a multitude of animals collected together, he was principally careful of their feathers, not less for

the sake of the famous mosaic images, than of the other works which were made of them. The halls and chambers of those houses were so many in number, as the conqueror above mentioned attests, that they could have accommodated two great princes with all their retinue. This celebrated house was situated in the place where, at present, the great convent of St. Francis stands.

" The other house, appropriated to the wild animals, had a large and handsome court, with a checquered pavement, and was divided into various apartments. One of them contained all the birds of prey, from the royal eagle to the kestrel, and many individuals of every species. These birds were distributed, according to their species, in various subterraneous chambers, which were more than seven feet deep, and upwards of seventeen in length and breadth. The half of every chamber was covered with flat stones; and stakes were fixed in the wall, on which they might sleep, and be defended from rain. The other half of the chamber was only covered with a lattice, through which they enjoyed the light of the sun. For the support of these birds were killed, daily, nearly five hundred turkeys. In the same house were many low halls, filled with a great number of strong wooden cages, in which lions, tigers, wolves, cayatos, and wild cats, were confined, and all other kinds of wild beasts; which were fed upon deer, rabbits, hares, techichis, and other animals, and the intestines of human sacrifices.

" The King of Mexico not only kept all the species of animals which other princes do for state, but likewise such as by nature seem exempted from slavery—namely, crocodiles and serpents. The serpents were kept in large casks or vessels; the crocodiles in ponds, which were walled round. There were also various

ponds for fish, two of which, that are remaining and still beautiful, we have seen in the palace of Chapoltepec, two miles from Mexico.

" Montezuma, who was not satisfied with having every sort of animal in his palace, also collected there all irregularly formed men, who, either from the colour of their hair or of their skin, or some other deformity in their persons, were oddities of their species. A humour this, however, not unattended with beneficial consequences, as it gave maintenance to a number of miserable objects, and delivered them from the inhuman insults of their other fellow-creatures.

" All his palaces were surrounded with beautiful gardens, where there was every kind of beautiful flower, odoriferous herb, and medicinal plant. He had likewise woods, enclosed with walls and furnished with variety of game, in which he frequently sported. One of these woods was upon an island in the lake, known at present, among the Spaniards, by the name of Pinon.

" Of all these palaces, gardens, and woods, there is now remaining the wood of Chapoltepec only, which the Spanish viceroys have preserved for their pleasure. All the others were destroyed by the conquerors. They laid in ruins the most magnificent buildings of antiquity, sometimes from an indiscreet zeal for religion, sometimes in revenge, or to make use of their materials. They neglected the cultivation of the royal gardens, cut down the woods, and reduced the country to such a state, that the magnificence of its former kings could not now find belief, were it not confirmed by the testimony of those who were the causes of its annihilation.

" Not only the palaces, but all the other places of pleasure, were kept in exquisite order and neatness,

even those which were seldom or never visited; as there was nothing in which he took more pride, than the cleanliness of his own person, and of every thing else which was his. He bathed regularly every day, and had baths, therefore, in all his palaces. Every day he wore four dresses; and that which he once put off, he never after used again; these were reserved as largesses for the nobles who served him, and the soldiers who behaved gallantly in war. Every morning, according to the accounts given by some historians, upwards of a thousand men were employed by him in sweeping and watering the streets of the city.

"In one of the royal buildings was an armoury, filled with all kinds of offensive and defensive arms which were made use of by those nations, with military ornaments and ensigns. He kept a surprising number of artificers at work, in manufacturing these and other things. He had numerous artists constantly busied likewise, namely, goldsmiths, mosaic workmen, sculptors, painters, and others. One whole district consisted solely of dancing-masters, who were trained up to entertain him."

Such is the marvellous account which the Abbé Clavigero gives of the more than oriental pomp of this barbaric Sultan of Tenochtitlan. The enormous expenses of his establishment of necessity entailed grievous burdens upon his subjects; and a sort of poll-tax was levied throughout his dominions with so much rigour, that the poorest person was compelled to furnish some contribution in kind to the treasury. These violent practices rendered his tyranny odious. At the same time, he is said to have shewn generosity to the necessitous, and to have made provision for his old servants and invalids. He took the command in person of his armies,

on several occasions when rebellion broke out in the tributary provinces; and none of them were able to dispute his supremacy, except the states of Tlascala, Mechoacan, and Tepeaca. "And he was wont to say," adds De Solis, "that he did not subdue them, because he wanted those enemies to supply him with captives for the sacrifices of his gods." *

Montezuma had reigned fourteen years over the Mexicans, when Heaven,

> "Making blind Zeal and bloody Avarice
> Its ministers of vengeance, sent among them
> Th' heroic Spaniard's unrelenting sword."

Cortes made his first entry into Tenochtitlan on the 8th of November, 1519. No sooner had he leisure to reflect on the situation in which he had placed himself, than he saw it was one which it would be equally difficult to maintain, and perilous, as well as disgraceful, to abandon. On the precarious favour or respect of Montezuma, depended his safety. It is difficult, indeed, to believe that Cortes had not foreseen the exigencies and dangers of the situation, and had not already decided on the daring expedient which he now

* De Solis makes the Aztec empire of Montezuma II. extend from Panama to New California; but Clavigero reduces it to more moderate dimensions, making its boundaries towards the eastern coast, the rivers Guasacualco and Tuspan, and towards the western coast, the plains of Soconusco and the port of Zacatula. According to these limits, it included the modern intendencies of Vera Cruz, Oaxaca, la Puebla, Mexico, and Valladolid. M. Humboldt estimates its area at 15,000 square leagues. Besides the Aztec empire, the small republics of Tlaxcallan (or Tlascala) and Chololla (or Cholula), the kingdoms of Tezcuco (or Acolhoacan) and Mechuacan, which comprised part of the intendency of Valladolid, were included in the ancient Anahuac, — the denomination of all the country between the 14th and 21st parallels of latitude.—See Humboldt's Political Essay, vol. i. pp. 11, 12.

proposed to his officers as the only means of security. This was no other than to seize Montezuma in his palace, and carry him prisoner to the Spanish quarters. The audacity of the measure startled the more timid, and objections were raised by many, but they were soon overruled by the more pressing considerations of necessity. Nor was Cortes without a pretence for this act of hostility. Advices had been brought him by two Tlascalan messengers,* that Qualpopoca, one of Montezuma's generals on the frontier, had insulted the colony at Vera Cruz; and that in an engagement which ensued, though the Spaniards were victorious, Escalante, the commander of the garrison, with seven of his men, had been mortally wounded, his horse killed, and one Spaniard had been surrounded and taken prisoner; that the head of this unfortunate captive, after being carried in triumph to different cities, in order to convince the people that their invaders were not immortal, had been sent to Mexico. No intelligence could be more mortifying or alarming; and if Cortes persisted in his march to Mexico after receiving the tidings, it gives the character of singular rashness and imprudence to his proceedings. His manner of putting into execution this crowning achievement, is thus related by Robertson:

"At his usual hour of visiting Montezuma, Cortes went to the palace, accompanied by Alvarado, Sandoval, Lugo, Velasquez de Leon, and Davila, five

* De Solis states, that this information reached him at Mexico, and that "it forced him upon resolutions less pacific." Robertson apparently cites Cortes himself for the statement, that he had received the information before he set out from Cholula. Yet, Bernal Diaz affirms, that he and some other officers advised the imprisonment of Montezuma, some days before they had received any intelligence of what had happened at Vera Cruz. This again is contradicted by other historians.

of his principal officers, and as many trusty soldiers. Thirty chosen men followed, not in regular order, but sauntering at some distance, as if they had no object but curiosity; small parties were posted at proper intervals, in all the streets leading from the Spanish quarters to the court; and the remainder of his troops, with the Tlascalan allies, were under arms, ready to sally out on the first alarm. Cortes and his attendants were admitted without suspicion; the Mexicans retiring, as usual, out of respect. He addressed the monarch in a tone very different from that which he had employed in former conferences, reproaching him bitterly as the author of the violent assault made upon the Spaniards by one of his officers, and demanded public reparation for the loss which they had sustained by the death of some of their companions, as well as for the insult offered to the great prince whose servants they were. Montezuma, confounded at this unexpected accusation, and changing colour, either from consciousness of guilt, or from feeling the indignity with which he was treated, asserted his own innocence with great earnestness, and, as a proof of it, gave orders instantly to bring Qualpopoca and his accomplices prisoners to Mexico. Cortes replied, with seeming complaisance, that a declaration so respectable left no doubt remaining in his own mind, but that something more was requisite to satisfy his followers, who would never be convinced that Montezuma did not harbour hostile intentions against them, unless, as an evidence of his confidence and attachment, he removed from his own palace, and took up his residence in the Spanish quarters, where he should be served and honoured as became a great monarch. The first mention of so strange a proposal bereaved Montezuma of speech,

and almost of motion. At length indignation gave him utterance, and he haughtily answered, ' That persons of his rank were not accustomed voluntarily to give up themselves as prisoners; and were he mean enough to do so, his subjects would not permit such an affront to be offered to their sovereign.' Cortes, unwilling to employ force, endeavoured alternately to soothe and to intimidate him. The altercation became warm, and having continued above three hours, Velasquez de Leon, an impetuous and gallant young man, exclaimed with impatience, ' Why waste more time in vain? Let us either seize him instantly, or stab him to the heart.' The threatening voice and fierce gestures with which these words were uttered, struck Montezuma. The Spaniards, he was sensible, had now proceeded so far, as left him no hope that they would recede. His own danger was imminent, the necessity unavoidable. He saw both, and, abandoning himself to his fate, complied with their request.

" His officers were called. He communicated to them his resolution. Though astonished and afflicted, they presumed not to question the will of their master, but carried him in silent pomp, all bathed in tears, to the Spanish quarters. When it was known that the strangers were conveying away the emperor, the people broke out into the wildest transports of grief and rage, threatening the Spaniards with immediate destruction, as the punishment justly due to their impious audacity. But as soon as Montezuma appeared, with a seeming gayety of countenance, and waved his hand, the tumult was hushed; and upon his declaring it to be of his own choice that he went to reside for some time among his new friends, the multitude, taught to revere every in-

timation of their sovereign's pleasure, quietly dispersed.

"Thus was a powerful prince seized by a few strangers in the midst of his capital, at noon-day, and carried off as a prisoner, without opposition or bloodshed. History contains nothing parallel to this event, either with respect to the temerity of the attempt, or the success of the execution; and were not all the circumstances of this extraordinary transaction authenticated by the most unquestionable evidence, they would appear so wild and extravagant, as to go far beyond the bounds of that probability which must be preserved even in fictitious narrations.

"Montezuma was received in the Spanish quarters with all the ceremonious respect which Cortes had promised. He was attended by his own domestics, and served with his usual state. His principal officers had free access to him, and he carried on every function of government as if he had been at perfect liberty. The Spaniards, however, watched him with the scrupulous vigilance which was natural in guarding such an important prize, endeavouring at the same time to soothe and reconcile him to his situation, by every external demonstration of regard and attachment. But from captive princes the hour of humiliation and suffering is never far distant. Qualpopoca, his son, and five of the principal officers who served under him, were brought prisoners to the capital, in consequence of the orders which Montezuma had issued. The emperor gave them up to Cortes, that he might inquire into the nature of their crime, and determine their punishment. They were formally tried by a Spanish court-martial; and though they had acted no other part than what became loyal subjects and brave men, in obeying the orders of their

lawful sovereign, and in opposing the invaders of their country, they were condemned to be burnt alive. The execution of such atrocious deeds is seldom long suspended. The unhappy victims were instantly led forth. The pile on which they were laid, was composed of the weapons collected in the royal magazine for the public defence. An innumerable multitude of Mexicans beheld, in silent astonishment, the double insult offered to the majesty of their empire; an officer of distinction committed to the flames by the authority of strangers, for having done what he owed in duty to his natural sovereign; and the arms provided by the foresight of their ancestors for avenging public wrongs, consumed before their eyes.

"But these were not the most shocking indignities which the Mexicans had to bear. The Spaniards, convinced that Qualpopoca would not have ventured to attack Escalante without orders from his master, were not satisfied with inflicting vengeance on the instrument employed in committing that crime, while the author escaped with impunity. Just before Qualpopoca was led out to suffer, Cortes entered the apartment of Montezuma, followed by some of his officers, and a soldier carrying a pair of fetters; and approaching the monarch with a stern countenance, told him, that as the persons who were now to undergo the punishment which they merited, had charged him as the cause of the outrage committed, it was necessary that he likewise should make atonement for that guilt; then, turning away abruptly, without waiting for a reply, commanded the soldier to clap the fetters on his legs. The orders were instantly executed. The disconsolate monarch, trained up with an idea that his person was sacred and inviolable, and considering this profanation of it as the

prelude of immediate death, broke out into loud lamentations and complaints. His attendants, speechless with horror, fell at his feet, bathing them with tears; and, bearing up the fetters in their hands, endeavoured with officious tenderness to lighten their pressure. Nor did their grief and despondency abate, until Cortes returned from the execution, and, with a cheerful countenance, ordered the fetters to be taken off. As Montezuma's spirits had sunk with unmanly dejection, they now rose into indecent joy; and, with an unbecoming transition, he passed at once from the anguish of despair to transports of gratitude and expressions of fondness towards his deliverer.

"The rigour with which Cortes punished the unhappy persons who first presumed to lay violent hands upon his followers, seems accordingly to have made all the impression that he desired. The spirit of Montezuma was not only overawed, but subdued. During six months that Cortes remained in Mexico, the monarch continued in the Spanish quarters, with an appearance of as entire satisfaction and tranquillity, as if he had resided there, not from constraint, but through choice. His ministers and officers attended him as usual. He took cognizance of all affairs; every order was issued in his name. The external aspect of government appearing the same, and all its ancient forms being scrupulously observed, the people were so little sensible of any change, that they obeyed the mandates of their monarch with the same submissive reverence as ever. Such was the dread which both Montezuma and his subjects had of the Spaniards, or such the veneration in which they held them, that no attempt was made to deliver their sovereign from confinement; and though Cortes, relying on this ascendant which he

had acquired over their minds, permitted him not only to visit his temples, but to make hunting excursions beyond the lake, a guard of a few Spaniards carried with it such a terror as to intimidate the multitude, and secure the captive monarch."

Cortes was now the ruler of the empire in the name of Montezuma, and he availed himself of his power to send emissaries into different parts of the country, accompanied with Mexicans of distinction, to survey the soil, examine the productions, pitch upon stations for future colonies, and endeavour to prepare the people for submitting to the Spanish yoke. By the same authority, he degraded some of the principal officers in the empire, substituting in their place persons who, he imagined, would prove obsequious to his will. One thing, however, was still wanting to complete his security. He wished to have such a command of the lake as might ensure a retreat, if, either from levity or disgust, the Mexicans should take arms against him, and break down the bridges or causeways, in order to enclose him in the city. In order to obtain this without giving disgust to the emperor or his court, Cortes artfully inflamed the curiosity of the Indians with accounts of the Spanish shipping, and those floating palaces that moved with such velocity on the water, without the assistance of oars; and when he found that the monarch himself was extremely desirous of seeing such a novelty, he gave him to understand, that nothing was wanting to his gratification besides a few necessaries from Vera Cruz, for that he had workmen in his army capable of building such vessels. The bait took with Montezuma; and he gave immediate orders that all his people should assist Cortes in whatever he should direct concerning the shipping. By

this means, in a few days, two brigantines were got ready, full rigged and equipped; and Montezuma was invited on board, to make the first trial of their sailing, of which he could form no idea. Accordingly he embarked for this purpose, and gave orders for a great hunting upon the water, in order that all his people might be diverted with the novelty presented by the Spaniards. On the day appointed, the royal equipage was ready early in the morning; and the lake was covered with a multitude of boats and canoes loaded with people. The Mexicans had augmented the number of their rowers on board the royal barges, with an intention to disgrace the Spanish vessels, which they regarded as clumsy, unwieldy, and heavy. But they were soon undeceived; a fresh gale starting up, the brigantines hoisted sail, to the utter astonishment of all the spectators, and soon left all the canoes behind; while the monarch exulted in the victory of the Spaniards, without once considering that now he had effectually rivetted his own chains.

Cortes having obtained this important point, resolved to put the condescension of the emperor to a trial still more severe. He urged Montezuma to acknowledge himself a vassal to the crown of Castile; to hold his crown of him as superior, and to subject his dominions to the payment of an annual tribute. With this requisition, humiliating as it was, Montezuma complied. He called together the chief men of his empire, and, in a solemn harangue, reminded them of the traditions and prophecies which led them to expect the arrival of a people sprung from the same stock with themselves, in order to take possession of the supreme power; he declared his belief that the Spaniards were this promised race; and that therefore he recognised the right of their monarch to govern

the Mexican empire, would lay his crown at his feet, and obey him as a tributary. While uttering these words, Montezuma discovered how deeply he was affected in making such a sacrifice. Tears and groans frequently interrupted his discourse. The first mention of such a resolution struck the assembly dumb with astonishment. This was followed by a sullen murmur of sorrow mingled with indignation, which indicated some violent eruption of rage to be near at hand. This Cortes foresaw, and seasonably interposed to prevent it, by declaring that his master had no intention to deprive Montezuma of the royal dignity, or to make any innovation upon the constitution and laws of the Mexican empire. This assurance, added to the dread of the Spanish arms, and the authority of their monarch's example, extorted the consent of the assembly; and the act of submission and homage was executed with all the formalities which the Spaniards were pleased to prescribe.

Montezuma, at the request of Cortes, accompanied this profession of fealty and homage with a magnificent present to his new sovereign; and, after his example, his subjects brought in very liberal contributions. The Spaniards then collected all the treasure which had been either voluntarily bestowed upon them at different times by Montezuma, or had been extorted from his people under various pretences; and having melted the gold and silver, the value of these amounted to 600,000 pesos. The soldiers were impatient to have it divided; and Cortes complied with their desire. A fifth of the whole was set apart as the tax due to the king. Another fifth was allowed to Cortes as commander. The sums advanced by the governor of Cuba, who had originally fitted out

the expedition, were then deducted. The remainder was then divided among the army, including the garrison of Vera Cruz, in proportion to their different ranks; and, after so many deductions, the share of a private man did not exceed 100 pesos. This sum fell so far below their sanguine expectations, that it required all the address, and no small exertions of the liberality of Cortes, to prevent an open mutiny.

It was not long, however, before Cortes found, that it was an easier achievement to gain an empire, than to keep one; and, forgetful of the wise advice, or disregarding the remonstrances of Father Bartholomew, his rash zeal again precipitated him into an act of aggression which had well nigh proved his utter ruin. Pliant as Montezuma was in other matters, on the point of his religion he remained inflexible. Cortes at length, losing all patience at his obstinacy, led out his soldiers in a transport of zeal, to throw down the idols in the great temple by force. But the priests took up arms, and the whole city, at their instigation, rose in defence of their gods; and he was compelled, in order to appease the tumult, to desist from the attempt, after dislodging the idols from one of the shrines, and placing in their stead an image of the Virgin.* From that moment the

* De Solis, who treats this account as incredible, demands, "What prudence could there be in undertaking so unseasonable an affair against the inclination of Montezuma? Was it fit to begin the conversion and undeceiving of idolaters by destroying their idols;—to regard an unprofitable outside show as the triumph of religion; to place *the holy images* in a place unclean and detestable, leaving them to the disposal of pagan priests, exposed to irreverence, profaneness, and sacrilege; and lastly, to celebrate, among the representations of the devil, the ineffable sacrifice of the mass?" Robertson, however, has shewn, that not only does the character of Cortes afford no ground for this writer's

Mexicans, who had permitted the imprisonment of their sovereign, and submitted to the exactions of the Spaniards without a struggle, began to meditate how they might avenge on their heads the insult offered to their deities. Half-measures are always dangerous, and Cortes had obviously been defeated. This conviction no doubt emboldened the priests, as much as his unsuccessful attempt had enraged them; and it accounts for the new spirit of determination which the humbled monarch assumed. The greater degree of liberty which had been conceded to him, enabled him to hold frequent consultations with the priests; and the result of their machinations was soon manifested by his sending for Cortes into his presence, to communicate to him, as a message from his gods, that he and his followers should instantly depart from the empire. Cortes, deeming it prudent to feign a compliance with the requisition, replied with composure, that he had already begun to prepare for returning to his own country; but, as he had destroyed the vessels in which he arrived, some time was requisite for building other ships. This appeared reasonable, and a number of Mexicans were sent to Vera Cruz to cut down timber, while some Spanish carpenters were appointed to superintend the work. The object of Cortes was to gain time; but, while he remained in this delicate predicament, unwelcome tidings from the coast hastened his departure from the capital. A hostile armament, fitted out by his old enemy the governor of Cuba, had landed near San Juan de Ullua; and the commander, Narvaez, had spread among the Mexicans the most unfavourable

incredulity, but his own despatches to the emperor relate this exploit, which is also mentioned by Bernal Diaz, Gomara, and Herrera.—See Hist. of America, *notes*.

representations of the character and actions of Cortes, which had even reached the ears of Montezuma. Several of the provinces had, in consequence, shewn a disposition to revolt. After in vain endeavouring to conciliate Narvaez by negotiation, Cortes saw that no resource was left, but to march against him. Leaving a hundred and fifty men under Pedro de Alvarado, an officer of distinguished courage, to guard the capital and the captive emperor, he left Mexico with the remainder of his forces, which, after they had been reinforced by the garrison of Vera Cruz, did not exceed 250 men. During his march to Zempoalla, of which Narvaez had taken possession, he made repeated overtures towards an accommodation with his opponent, availing himself of the opportunity thus afforded to gain over his officers by liberal presents. The Mexican gold wrought wonders among the troops, but Narvaez, enraged at discovering their pacific temper, set a price on the head of Cortes, and advanced from Zempoalla to offer him battle. The more wary and experienced general watched his opportunity, attacked Narvaez in the dead of night, and entirely defeated him, taking him prisoner, and compelling all his troops to transfer their allegiance to himself. Only two soldiers were killed on the side of Cortes, and two officers with fifteen privates of the adverse party. The vanquished, on finding themselves treated as countrymen and friends, almost unanimously ranged themselves under the standard of the man whom they were sent to annihilate, and who thus, from being on the edge of destruction, found himself at the head of 1000 Spaniards, ready to follow wherever he should lead them.

Nothing could be more seasonable than the accession of strength thus unexpectedly obtained. Only a few

days after, a courier arrived from Mexico with the disagreeable intelligence, that the capital had revolted against his garrison, in consequence of an act of aggression equally rash and barbarous. Alvarado, with a view to strike terror into those who were secretly conspiring against the Spaniards, had attacked the inhabitants during one of their solemn festivals, in the very court of their great temple, and massacred great numbers. This atrocious outrage had raised the whole population against them. The Mexicans had seized and destroyed the two brigantines which commanded the lake, and attacking the Spaniards in their quarters, had killed several, wounded more, reduced to ashes their magazine of provisions, and threatened them with utter extermination at once by slaughter and famine. Yet, strange to say, uninstructed in the science of war, they had neglected to break down the causeways and bridges, by which means they might have insulated their capital; and Cortes, at the head of his Spaniards and two thousand Tlascalans, marched without opposition to their capital. By Alvarado and his companions he was received with transports of joy; but the Mexicans had lost their veneration and fear of the strangers, and, irritated afresh by the haughty conduct which Cortes observed on his return, they renewed their assault on the Spanish quarters with undaunted courage and implacable ferocity. Though the artillery swept off multitudes at every discharge, and every blow of the Spanish weapons fell with mortal effect, the attack was continued till sunset with unabated impetuosity, and more than once they were on the point of forcing their way into the fortifications. In a sally which Cortes made in person the next day, he was compelled at length to retire before overwhelming numbers,

with the loss of twelve soldiers killed, and above sixty wounded. Another sally, made with greater force, was not more effectual, and the general himself was wounded in the hand. Too late he perceived his error; but, in this urgent extremity, his fertile mind suggested one resource. When the Mexicans approached the next morning to renew the assault, they beheld their captive sovereign, who, in his royal robes, advanced to the battlements, and, while every tongue was silent, addressed them on behalf of the Spaniards, and exhorted them to cease from hostilities. A sullen murmur of disapprobation succeeded to his discourse, which at length suddenly broke out into the most furious rage: flights of arrows and volleys of stones were poured on the ramparts; and before the Spanish soldiers appointed to guard Montezuma had time to cover him with their shields, he was wounded with two arrows, and a stone, which struck him on the temple, brought him to the ground. On seeing their monarch fall, the Mexicans, horror-struck, fled with precipitation. Montezuma, scorning to survive this last humiliation, tore from his wounds the bandages which the Spaniards had applied to them, and with Indian constancy refused all nourishment, till death speedily terminated his sufferings. His tragical end might excite pity, could we forget the diabolical atrocities with which he commenced his reign, and the tyranny by which it was signalised.

The death of their captive rendered a retreat on the part of the Spaniards a measure indispensable. But they had first to sustain fresh conflicts. The Mexicans had taken possession of a high tower in the great temple, which commanded their quarters, and not a Spaniard could stir without being exposed to their missile weapons. A detachment of chosen soldiers

which was sent to dislodge them, was twice repulsed; and Cortes, ordering a buckler to be tied to his wounded arm, rushed forth among the thickest of the combatants. Encouraged by the presence of their general, the Spaniards returned to the charge with such vigour, that they gradually forced their way up the steps, driving the Mexicans before them to the platform on the summit, where a dreadful carnage began. Having become masters of the tower, they set fire to it, and continued their preparations for the retreat unmolested. *

At midnight,† the army commenced its retreat in silence along the causeway leading to Tacuba,

* This tower, which was set fire to, would seem to have been of wood, whereas the temple itself was of clay faced with stone. Probably, what was burnt, was a building on the top of the pyramid of which the temple properly consisted. Humboldt speaks of cupolas which were elevated 56 feet above the pyramid itself, which would make two-thirds of the whole height consist of the wooden superstructure described as a tower.—See page 35. Robertson relates, on the authority of Herrera and Torquemada, that after the Spaniards had gained the platform, two young Mexicans, approaching Cortes in the posture of suppliants, suddenly seized him, and hurried him away to the parapet, over which they threw themselves headlong, thinking to drag Cortes with them. But he, with preternatural strength and agility, extricated himself from their grasp, while they perished in the unsuccessful attempt. Clavigero, however, rejects the story as apocryphal.

† De Solis tells us, that Cortes was against this night-march, but gave way to the majority in the council held on the occasion. He admits, however, a singular fact, mentioned by the historians, that the mind of this extraordinary man was biassed by the vain prediction of an astrologer, a private in the army, who had advised him to march away that very night, "for that he should lose the greater part of his army if he suffered a certain favourable constellation to pass into another aspect." This man, known in the army by the name of the Necromancer, was among the slain.

which was chosen as the shortest, and as being in an opposite direction to the road they were expected to take. The Mexicans had broken down the causeways in several places, or rather removed the wooden bridges over the canals, with a view to intercept their communication with the main land; but Cortes had prepared a portable bridge of timber to be laid over these breaches. They reached the first without molestation, hoping that their retreat was undiscovered; but, while intent upon placing their bridge, they were suddenly alarmed with a tremendous sound of warlike instruments, and a general shout from an immense multitude, who assailed them from their canoes on every side with showers of arrows and stones. Unfortunately, the wooden bridge was wedged so fast in the sand by the weight of the artillery, that it was found impossible to remove it; and the Spaniards advanced with precipitation towards the second breach. Here, crowded on a narrow causeway, their discipline was of little avail; the darkness of night added to the confusion, and, unable to sustain the weight of the multitudes which pressed upon them, they began to give way. The disorder and flight soon became universal. Cortes, with about a hundred soldiers and a few horse, forced his way over the two remaining breaches in the causeway, the bodies of the dead serving to fill up the chasms, and reached the main land. As soon as he could form this shattered remnant of his army, he returned to assist the rest in their retreat. He met with a party who had broken through, but found more overwhelmed by their assailants, or perishing in the lake, while the piteous lamentations of others reached his ears, who were being carried off in triumph to be sacrificed

to the gods. Before day, all who had escaped assembled at Tacuba; but, when morning dawned, Cortes could not repress his tears at discovering his troops reduced to less than half their number,* while all the artillery, ammunition, and baggage were lost, the greater part of the horses and above 1000 Tlascalans were killed, and only a very small portion of the treasure which they had amassed was saved. It was some consolation, that Aguilar and Marina, whose services as interpreters were of so essential importance, were among those who had made their escape. This night (July 1, 1520) is still distinguished in New Spain by the name of *Noche Triste*, the Melancholy Night.

They were now on the western side of the lake,

* Cortes states his own loss in this disastrous retreat at 150 men, but it was his interest to conceal its full extent. De Solis rates it at 200; Gomara, at 450; Bernal Diaz, at 870, affirming, that only 440 escaped; and Robertson inclines to think, that the loss could not fall short of 600 men. Two of the sons of Montezuma are stated to have been among the slain. Another son survived, who embraced the catholic religion, and was ennobled by the King of Spain. It is from this son, called Tohualicahuatzin, and after baptism, Don Pedro Motezuma, that the Counts of Motezuma and Tula, in Spain, are descended. De Solis states, that the king left also three daughters, who were afterwards converted, and married Spaniards. Humboldt says: "The *Cano* Motezuma, the *Andrade* Motezuma, and, if I am not mistaken, even the Counts of Miravalle at Mexico, trace back their origin to the beautiful princess Tecuichpotzin, the youngest daughter of Motezuma II. The descendants of this king did not mingle their blood with the whites till the second generation."—"Some of my readers," he adds in a subsequent note, "will perhaps be interested in knowing, that a descendant of Christopher Columbus, and a descendant of King Motezuma, were among the viceroys of New Spain. Don Pedro Nuno Colon, Duke de Veraguas, made his entry at Mexico in 1673, and died six days afterwards. The viceroy Don Joseph Sarmiento Valladares, Count de Motezuma, governed from 1697 to 1701."—HUMBOLDT'S *Pol. Essay*, vol. ii. pp. 54, 79, *notes*.

and had to turn round its northern end to regain the road to Tlascala, which lay about sixty-four miles to the east. A soldier of that nation acted as their guide, conducting them through a country in some places marshy, in others mountainous, and affording hardly any provisions, so that they were reduced to feed on berries, roots, and the stalks of green maize.* For six days, they marched with little respite, under continual alarms, skirmishing at times with hovering detachments of the Mexicans, and suffering the aggravation of fatigue produced by hunger and thirst. Amid these complicated distresses, their commander preserved an unshaken fortitude, the foremost in every danger, and sharing all their hardships with cheerfulness; and the soldiers, animated by his example, continued to follow him with unabated confidence. On the sixth day, they arrived near Otumba, which lay in the main road. Early next morning, as they advanced towards the eminence which commanded the plain of that name, Marina remarked, that several parties of Mexicans who hung on their rear, exclaimed, "Go on, robbers, to the place where vengeance awaits you!" The meaning of this obscure threat was explained when they reached the summit of the pass, and beheld a vast army covering the valley as far the eye could reach. The Mexicans, knowing that the Spaniards must pass this way, had here collected all their forces. In the midst was seen the great standard of the empire, which was borne only before the monarch or his captain-general. At the sight of this immense multitude, the boldest were ready to despair; but

* De Solis mentions, that one of the wounded horses died on this march, and was divided as a particular regale.

Cortes allowed them no time for reflection. Briefly reminding them, that no alternative remained but either to conquer or to die, he instantly led them to the charge. The Mexicans were never able to stand the attack of the compact battalion of the Spaniards, and whichever way they moved, the undisciplined mass was penetrated and dispersed; but so immense were the numbers, that they soon closed again over the bodies of the slain, and the Spaniards were ready to sink under exertions to which there seemed no end. At this crisis, Cortes recollected to have heard, that on the fate of the royal standard depended the whole fortune of their battles. Assembling all the horse that remained capable of service, he resolved to dash at it, though in a distant part of the field, heading the charge in person. The Indians gave back before the cavalry, who soon arrived at the spot where the standard was guarded by a chosen band of nobles. These were soon broken, and Cortes, with a stroke of his lance, brought the Mexican general to the ground. On seeing him fall, one of the Spanish officers, Juan de Salamanca, leaped from his horse, and, despatching the wounded general, seized the standard, and delivered it to Cortes. The moment their leader fell, and the standard disappeared, a universal panic seized the Mexicans, and, throwing away their weapons, they all fled with precipitation. A terrible destruction ensued among the fugitives, till at length the over-wearied Spaniards returned to collect the spoils of the field, which were so valuable as almost to compensate for the wealth they had lost at Mexico.*

* The Spanish historians represent this as the greatest victory in the annals of the American conquests. 20,000 Mexicans are said to have been slain. "And if," says De Solis, "it were cer-

The next day (July 8th), to their great joy, they entered the Tlascalan territory, where, notwithstanding their reverses, they were received with unabated cordiality.

All but Cortes now thought only of abandoning a country, to the conquest of which they had found themselves unequal; but his mind, as eminently distinguished by perseverance as by enterprise, was still bent on accomplishing his original purpose. With this view, while his army were reposing after their hardships, their leader, by a judicious distribution among the Tlascalan chiefs of the rich spoils of Otumba, secured the future services of the republic. His other preliminary measures were, to draw a small supply of ammunition and two or three field-pieces from his stores at Vera Cruz, and to despatch a confidential officer, with four ships of Narvaez's armament, to Hispaniola and Jamaica, in order to engage adventurers, and purchase horses and military stores. Moreover, knowing that it would be in vain to attempt the reduction of Mexico, unless he could secure the command of the lake, he gave orders to prepare, in the mountains of Tlascala, materials for building twelve brigantines, so that they might be carried there in pieces, ready to be put together, and launched when he stood in need of them. As soon, however, as the soldiers discovered the intentions of Cortes, they began at first to murmur, and at length openly to remonstrate against being committed to all the perils and hardships of another campaign; and those more especially who had followed Narvaez, could not be won over by either arguments, entreaties, or

tain that St. James the Apostle fought visibly for the Spaniards, as some prisoners affirmed, the slaughter of these people would appear more credible."

presents, further than to delay their departure till it should be convenient to send them home to Cuba. Beguiled by this promise, they were without difficulty induced to march against the people of Tepeaca, who had some time before cut off a detachment of their comrades that were marching from Zempoalla to Mexico. Cortes took the command in person, supported by a numerous body of Tlascalans, and in a few weeks, after a great slaughter of the Tepeacans, reduced that province to subjection. By this and various other expeditions against the adjacent provinces, all of which were crowned with success, his men again became accustomed to victory, while the Tlascalan warriors acquired the habit of acting in conjunction with the Spaniards, and the Mexican power was weakened. All these efforts, however, would have been of little avail, had he not unexpectedly obtained reinforcements. Two small ships, containing a supply of men and stores which the governor of Cuba had sent to support Narvaez, were decoyed into the harbour of Vera Cruz, and seized, the soldiers being easily persuaded to join their countrymen. Soon after, three other ships, belonging to an armament fitted out by the governor of Jamaica, after a disastrous attempt to make a descent on the northern provinces, were compelled by want of provisions to touch at Vera Cruz; and these troops also were soon persuaded to follow the standard of Cortes. About the same time, a merchant vessel arrived from Spain, freighted by some private adventurers with military stores, which Cortes eagerly purchased; and the crew, following the general example, joined him at Tlascala. It is not a little remarkable, that the two individuals chiefly instrumental in furnishing him with these

supplies, should be, the one an avowed enemy, the other an envious rival.

From these various quarters, the army of Cortes was augmented with 180 men and 20 horses, which made him feel strong enough to dismiss such of the soldiers of Narvaez as were most troublesome and discontented. After their departure, he still mustered 550 infantry, of whom fourscore were armed with muskets or cross-bows, forty horsemen, and nine field-pieces. At the head of these, together with 10,000 Indians, he began his march to Mexico on the 28th of December, six months after his disastrous retreat from that city.

In the meantime, the Mexicans had not been idle. On the death of Montezuma, they had raised his brother Quetlavaca* to the throne, under whose direction those spirited measures were adopted, which had issued in the expulsion of the Spaniards. Besides making every effort to put his capital and kingdom into a state of defence, he had laboured to detach the Tlascalans from the Spanish interest, by representing that their allies were avowed enemies of their gods, and would not fail at last to subject them to the same yoke they sought to impose on the Mexicans. It required all the address of Cortes to counteract the impression made by these representations. But, in the midst of his sagacious arrangements, Quetlavaca was cut off by the small-pox.† In his stead, the Mexicans elected

* So he is styled by the European historians, but his real name, Humboldt says, was Cuitlahuatzin.

† This distemper is said to have been unknown in that quarter of the globe, until introduced, in 1520, by a negro slave of Narvaez, when it carried off half of the inhabitants of Mexico, and, among others, the sovereign.—See Humboldt's Pol. Essay, vol. i. p. 118.

Guatimozin (Quauhtemotzin), his nephew and the son-in-law of Montezuma, who, by his bravery, sufficiently justified their choice.

On entering the Mexican territories, Cortes discovered that various preparations had been made to obstruct his progress; but his troops forced their way with little difficulty to Tezcuco, the second city in the empire, situated on the banks of the lake, about twenty miles from Tenochtitlan. Here he determined to establish his head-quarters, as the most proper station for launching his brigantines, and to await the result of his negotiation in Hispaniola. In order to render his residence the more secure, he deposed the cazique of that place, who was represented to have usurped the authority, and restored the nominal government to the rightful heir of that dignity, by which act he attached the new cazique and his adherents inviolably to his interests. He then proceeded to attack, successively, several of the towns situated round the lake, compelling them to submit to the Spanish crown, or reducing them to ruins. Other towns he prevailed upon by conciliatory measures and liberal promises, to shake off the Mexican yoke, and acknowledge the King of Castile as their sovereign. While, by these dexterous measures, he was daily circumscribing the Mexican power within narrower limits, all his schemes had well nigh been defeated by a conspiracy to assassinate him, set on foot by some of the secret partisans of Velasquez. On the very evening before the day appointed for perpetrating the crime, one of Cortes's ancient followers who had been seduced into the conspiracy, touched with compunction, went privately to his general, and disclosed the whole. Cortes, accompanied by some of his trusty officers, instantly repaired to the quarters of the ringleader, and, while his at-

tendants seized the traitor, he snatched from his bosom a paper containing the signatures of all the conspirators. This list he suffered no one to see: the historians tell us, that it contained names which filled him with surprise and sorrow, which is possible; but he chose to give out, that Villefagna, the traitor, had destroyed it, and, under the severest tortures, had refused to reveal the names of his accomplices. The next morning, Villefagna was seen hanging before the door of his lodging; and Cortes was satisfied to have extinguished the conspiracy, while the important discovery he had made as to the extent of the disaffection, he prudently confined to his own breast.

The materials for building the brigantines were at length finished, and waited only for a body of Spaniards to conduct them to Tezcuco. The Tlascalans furnished 8000 *Tamenes*, a servile caste, to carry the materials on their shoulders, and 15,000 warriors as an armed escort. The command of this convoy Cortes entrusted to Sandoval, a favourite officer, at the head of 200 foot-soldiers, fifteen horse, and two field-pieces. The service was not less singular than important: the beams, planks, masts, cordage, sails, iron-work, and other materials requisite for the construction of thirteen brigantines, were to be carried sixty miles overland through a mountainous country. In some places, where the road lay through forests, or along the ridge of mountains, the line of march extended above six miles. Parties of hostile Indians frequently shewed themselves, hovering around them, yet not daring to make an attack; and Sandoval had the credit of conducting the whole of this numerous body in safety to Tezcuco. In the meantime, reinforcements had arrived at Vera Cruz from Hispaniola, consisting of 200 soldiers, 80 horses, two battering cannon, and a con-

siderable supply of arms and ammunition. On the 28th of April, the brigantines were launched with military and religious ceremonies. Although of inconsiderable bulk, rudely constructed, and manned chiefly with landsmen, they were yet formidable to a people who possessed no vessel larger than a canoe. Nevertheless, the first effort of the Mexicans was directed against them, and hoping to supply by numbers what they wanted in force, their navy of boats rowed on boldly to the attack. The brigantines, becalmed, could scarcely advance to meet them; but, as the enemy drew near, a breeze sprang up, and filled the sails of the Spanish vessels, which now broke through the Mexicans in all directions, running down the canoes, and soon dissipated the whole armament. From this time, Cortes remained master of the lake.

The brigantines were now formed into three divisions, in order to second and cover the several attacks which Cortes directed to be carried on from three different quarters; from Tezcuco on the east side of the lake, Tacuba on the west, and Cuayocan towards the south. Dear-bought experience, however, had taught the Spaniards the necessity of cautious movements, and Cortes is said to have been moreover anxious to preserve the city from being destroyed. However this might be, for above a month he adhered to a system strikingly at variance with his former policy, contenting himself with destroying the aqueducts, and skirmishing with the Mexicans day by day, without attempting to make a lodgement in the city. His troops began at length to be wearied and dispirited with the length and difficulties of the siege; and on the 3d of July, he ordered a general assault to be made with a view to take the city by storm. To secure a retreat in case of need, he appointed the cap-

tain of the troops he had received from Hispaniola, to fill up the breaches and gaps in the causeway. That officer, deeming it inglorious to be thus employed, while his companions were engaged in the heat of action, is said to have neglected the important charge committed to him, and to have hurried on to mingle with the combatants. To this circumstance the Spanish historians attribute the disastrous repulse which Cortes sustained in this day's action, admitting, at the same time, that Cortes was out-manœuvred by the Mexicans, who contrived to attack the Spaniards and auxiliaries at once in front and rear. The account given of the circumstances is very confused; thus much, however, is clear, that the rout of the Spaniards was complete; nor were the brigantines able, owing to the shoal water, to protect the fugitives from the armed canoes. Above twenty Spaniards were killed, and twice that number were taken prisoners. While endeavouring to save his men, Cortes himself was laid hold of by some Mexicans, who were hurrying him off in triumph, when two of his officers rescued him at the expense of their own lives; but he received several dangerous wounds before he could break loose.

The approach of night, though it brought a respite from the fatigues and dangers of the combat, ushered in, what was hardly less grievous, the noise of barbarous triumph on the part of the victors. The Spanish historians paint the horrors of the scene in vivid colours, telling us, that the whole city was illuminated, so that the Spaniards could plainly see in the great temple, the preparations made for sacrificing their companions; that they heard their dying shrieks, and thought they could distinguish each unhappy victim by his voice. The imagination, no doubt,

might suggest all this.* In the morning, information was brought, that the heads of the slaughtered Spaniards had been distributed among the adjacent states, with the oracular intimation, delivered by the god of war himself in an audible voice, that in eight days, the invaders should be finally destroyed.

This explicit prediction, delivered under such circumstances, and accompanied with so satisfactory a pledge, gained universal credit among the superstitious Indians. Cortes now found himself deserted by his auxiliaries: even the fidelity of the Tlascalans was shaken. Never had his situation been more dispiriting. But in this exigency, he again shewed himself the master of fortune. Finding it in vain to combat superstitious fears with arguments, he resolved to suspend all military operations during the period imprudently specified by the priests. Under cover of the brigantines, his troops lay in safety, and the fatal term expired without any fresh disaster.

When his allies found that the gods of the Mexicans had deceived them, Cortes again rose in their estimation; and whether inspired by shame or by revenge, they flocked to his standard in such numbers, that, if we may believe his own account, he soon found himself at the head of 150,000 Indians. And now he

* Cortes himself states, that they could distinctly observe what passed when their countrymen were sacrificed. Bernal Diaz describes the impression which the spectacle made upon him:—"Before I saw the breasts of my companions opened, their hearts, yet fluttering, offered to an accursed idol, and their flesh devoured by an exulting enemy, I was accustomed to enter a battle, not only without fear, but with high spirit. But, from that time, I never advanced to fight the Mexicans without a secret horror and anxiety: my heart trembled at the thoughts of a death I had seen them suffer."—ROBERTSON'S *America*, *notes*.

resolved, we are told, to adopt a new system of attack, which one is surprised that he did not follow from the first. As the Spaniards pushed forward, the Indians regularly repaired the causeways behind them. As soon as they got possession of any part of the town, the houses were levelled to the ground.* Day by day, the Mexicans were hemmed in within more contracted limits; and while war wasted them from without, famine began to consume them within the city. The stores which Guatimozin had laid up, were exhausted by the multitudes who had crowded into the capital to defend their sovereign and the temples of their gods; and the brigantines rendered it almost impossible to convey to the besieged any supply. Infectious distempers now attacked the crowded and famished population, and filled up the measure of their sufferings. Yet still, the haughty spirit of the Mexican monarch rejected with scorn every overture of peace; and every inch of ground was disputed with the invaders, till three fourths of the city had been laid in ruins. Not before then, was Guatimozin persuaded to attempt his escape. To facilitate this measure, they endeavoured to amuse Cortes with overtures of submission; but Sandoval had orders to watch every motion of the enemy. Observing some large canoes rowing across the lake with extraordinary rapidity, he instantly gave the signal to chase,

* Cortes relates, that the Indians, to revenge themselves for the oppressions which they had suffered from the Aztec kings, flocked in great numbers, even from the remotest provinces, when they learned that the destruction of the capital was going on. The rubbish of the demolished houses served to fill up the canals. The streets were made dry to allow the Spanish cavalry to act. "More than 50,000 Indians assisted us," says Cortes, "that day, when, marching over heaps of carcases, we at length gained the great street of Tacuba, and burned the house of king Guatimucin."

and the swiftest-sailing brigantine soon overtook them, and was preparing to fire, when at once the rowers dropt their oars, while all on board with loud cries conjured him to forbear, as the emperor was there. The Spaniards eagerly seized their prize, who preserved a dignified composure, and, when conducted to Cortes, manifested in his deportment, neither the sullen fierceness of a barbarian, nor the dejection of a suppliant. The historians have put into his mouth on this occasion, a speech breathing the Roman heroism. "I have done what became a monarch. I have defended my people to the last extremity. Nothing now remains but to die. Take this dagger," (laying his hand on one which Cortes wore,) "plant it in my breast, and put an end to a life which can no longer be of use."*

As soon as the fate of their monarch was known, the resistance of the Mexicans ceased, and on the 13th of August,† Cortes took possession of what remained of Tenochtitlan. Thus terminated this memorable siege, which had continued seventy-five days, hardly one of which passed without an action. In no part of the New World did the Europeans meet with such determined and effective resistance; and the fall of Mexico was, after all, brought about by the jealousy of the neighbouring states, and the revolt of its own subjects, as much as by the valour of the Spaniards. The fate of

* Cortes's account is, that he made him sit down, and treated him with confidence; "but the young man," he adds, "put his hand on the poniard which I wore at my side, and exhorted me to kill him, because, since he had done all that his duty to himself and his people demanded of him, he had no other desire than death."

† St. Hypolitus's day, which was still celebrated at Mexico by a procession of the viceroy and *oidores* round the city, up to the revolution.

the capital decided that of the empire, the provinces submitting one after another; and thus, by the daring adventure of a private individual, unauthorized by his sovereign, nay, regarded and treated as an undutiful and seditious subject,* was Mexico annexed to the crown of Castile.

The exultation of the Spaniards was at first excessive, but it was quickly damped by the smallness of the booty which was found amid the ruins of the city. To account for this, it was supposed that Guatimozin had ordered the greater part of his wealth to be thrown into the lake, or otherwise concealed; the Indian auxiliaries also, were suspected to have carried off the most valuable part of the spoil, while some accused Cortes and his confidential officers with having secretly appropriated more than their share of the expected treasure. To check the growing spirit of discontent, Cortes had recourse to a measure which stains the glory of all his great achievements. He subjected the captive monarch and his chief favourite to torture,† in order to force from them a disclosure of the place where it was supposed they had concealed their treasure. The minister, overcome by the agony, is said to have besought his master for permission to reveal the secret. Guatimozin sternly replied, "Am I re-

* Owing to the representations of Velasquez, and the intrigues of his partizans, the conduct of Cortes had been declared by the council of the Indies, an irregular usurpation; and a few weeks after the reduction of Mexico, Christoval de Tapia arrived at Vera Cruz, commissioned to supersede Cortes, to seize his person, and confiscate his effects. Cortes had the address to elude this danger, and to prevail on Tapia to abandon the province; and he was ultimately appointed captain-general and governor of New Spain. Charles subsequently created him marquess del Valle de Guaxaca, (or Oaxaca) a title still borne by his descendants.

† He is said to have caused the soles of his feet to be exposed to a slow fire, after having soaked them in oil.

posing on a bed of flowers?" Awed by this reproach, the favourite persisted in his silence, and expired; on which the royal victim was released from the torture, to undergo fresh indignities. His end was the same as that of the caziques of Tezcuco, (or Acolhuacan) and Tacuba. On the suspicion or pretended charge of having secretly conspired to excite a revolt, they were all three hung on the same tree, and according to a hieroglyphic painting seen by Humboldt, they were hung by the feet, to lengthen out their torments. This act of cruelty in Cortes, excited murmurs among the very soldiers. Bernal Diaz says, "The death of the young king was a very unjust thing; and it was accordingly blamed by us all." Nor was this the only act of atrocious cruelty and injustice by which, in the wantonness of power, Cortes and his followers revenged themselves for their past sufferings. In almost every district of the Mexican empire, the progress of the Spanish arms was tracked with blood. In the country of Panuco, sixty caziques and four hundred nobles were burnt at one time, in the presence of their wives and children. This unexampled act of barbarity was committed by Sandoval, with the consent, if not at the command of Cortes. His example, and that of his principal officers, encouraged persons of subordinate rank to venture on the commission of still greater excesses; and Nuño de Guzman, in particular, distinguished himself by deeds of peculiar rigour and enormity, in various expeditions which he conducted.

After the fall and destruction of the capital, Cortes remained for four or five months at Cojahuacan, a place for which he constantly displayed a strong predilection, being undetermined whether he should rebuild the city on the old site, or some other spot.

He at last decided on the old situation, "because the city of Temixtitlan (Tenochtitlan) had acquired celebrity, because its position was delightful, and because in all times it had been considered as the head of the Mexican provinces." It cannot, however, admit of a doubt, Humboldt remarks, that, on account of the frequent inundations suffered by both old and new Mexico, it would have been better to rebuild the city to the east of Tezcuco, or on the heights between Tacuba and Tacubaya. The magnificent plan on which Cortes began at length to rebuild the capital, was worthy of his grand and daring conceptions. So immense was the concourse of native artisans who wrought for him, that, in 1524, the new city of Mexico already numbered, according to his own statement, 30,000 inhabitants. Cortes continued to exercise all the powers of a governor till, in 1522, he was invested with that appointment by the emperor. The court of Spain manifested, however, their distrust of his loyalty, and jealousy of his abilities, by the most ungenerous and vexatious proceedings. In 1528, Cortes eluded a commission of inquiry, only by returning to Spain; and though he succeeded in re-instating himself in the emperor's favour, and obtained as the reward of his services, the title of marquess, the order of St. Jago, and the grant of an extensive territory in New Spain, he came back to Mexico, in 1530, with diminished authority. The civil jurisdiction was now separated from the military command, for the evident purpose of diminishing and controlling the absolute power of this too formidable subject; and while he was allowed to retain the situation of commander-in-chief, the civil affairs were henceforth administered by the *audienza real*. In 1535, Cortes undertook to conduct in person, a voyage of discovery, in search of the

grand *desideratum* of navigators—some strait which might afford an outlet from the Atlantic into the great ocean. After astonishing the world with his martial exploits, he displayed an energy of character not less admirable in his maritime undertakings; and the emperor was well pleased to see him engage in employments which removed him from the theatre of his brilliant career. An expedition, undertaken at his private expense, had discovered the coast of California the preceding year. Cortes coasted both sides of the gulf then known by the name of the Sea of Cortes, and was pursuing with unabated ardour his discoveries, when the report of his death was spread in Mexico.* It was during his stay at the bay of Santa Cruz, called afterwards the Port de la Paz, or of the Marquess de Valle, that the mortifying news reached him, of the arrival of the first viceroy at New Spain. After encountering a thousand perils, Cortes anchored safely at Acapulco. He employed Francisco de Ulloa to pursue, at his own expense, the career of discovery, but returned to Europe in 1540, where his posthumous appearance appears to have been far from welcome to his ungrateful sovereign. By Charles he was treated with cold civility; by his ministers with insolent neglect. He survived however, seven years, in affluence, if not in the enjoyment of all the honours he had fairly earned; and at his death, which took place Dec. 2, 1547, in the sixty-second year of his age, he left to his sons a very considerable fortune.

The whole interest of the *colonial* history of Mexico, terminates with the life and administration of this

* This was so far believed, that Juana de Zuñiga, his spouse, fitted out two vessels and a caravel, to ascertain the truth of the intelligence.

extraordinary man, of whose vast capacity, brilliant faculties, and romantic achievements, it is difficult to speak in terms of just eulogy and admiration, without seeming to palliate deeds of atrocity, and to justify the doubtful or criminal motives by which he was actuated. When he first landed in New Spain, it was in the character of a lawless adventurer; for, the commission under which he acted being revoked, his conduct, from that moment, was no better than piracy. The boldness and vastness of his enterprise make us forget that it was founded on injustice, and carried on by deceit and violence. Yet, the constant loyalty of his pretensions, and his solicitude to obtain the sanction of his sovereign, in whose name and for whose benefit the whole enterprise was carried on, give the semblance of patriotism, and even of disinterestedness to his conduct. Moreover, when we reflect on the odious character of the tyranny which he overthrew, and the still more infernal nature of the abominations practised by the Mexican priests—on the bloody wars, the human sacrifices, and the cannibal feasts which had long cried to heaven for the exterminating sword of vengeance—we seem to see in Cortes the unconscious minister of the Divine wrath, and are half reconciled to the desolation which swept away the Aztec empire. Nothing, indeed, can justify the violent methods which Cortes resorted to, in the name of religion, to extinguish their idolatry, in order that he might substitute a creed and a worship less corrupt and depraved indeed, but still blind and idolatrous. Had he contented himself with every where putting a stop to human sacrifices and cannibal practices, had he sought to deliver the people from the yoke of a diabolical priestcraft, instead of inciting them to make common cause with their priests, by insulting their

temples, he would have had the secret dictates of the conscience even in those idolaters, to second his authoritative persuasions; he would have had the popular feeling on his side, already alive to the intolerable nature of the regal tyranny and the sacerdotal exactions. Nor is it, perhaps, going too far to suppose, that he would thereby have secured the visible sanction of a Divine protector, in an enterprise which would have assumed the aspect of a most humane and benevolent interposition on behalf of an oppressed nation. But Cortes was a soldier, the worst of all missionaries; and though he might have learned wisdom of his chaplain, it is not surprising, that while the ecclesiastics of Spain were kindling the fires of the Inquisition for Jewish and Protestant heretics, he, a simple layman, should be acquainted with no better means of converting idolaters, than fire and the sword.

From 1535 to 1808, Mexico continued to be governed by viceroys, nominated by the Court of Spain. Of the fifty individuals who filled this high office, it is remarked, that one only was an American. This was Don Juan de Acuna, Marquess de Casa Fuerte, a native of Peru, who governed Mexico from 1722 to 1734; "a disinterested man, and good administrator." It has already been mentioned, that a Count de Motezuma, descended from the Sultan of Tenochtitlan, held the office (from 1697 to 1701); but he was a Spaniard, as was the Duke de Veraguas, a descendant of Columbus, who made his entry at Mexico in 1673, and died six days afterwards. Almost the only bright spot in the page of the colonial annals, is the administration of the viceroy Count de Revillagigedo, during the last twenty years of the eighteenth century. Under his direction, good roads leading from the

capital to different parts, were laid out; the streets of the principal cities were paved and lighted, and a good police established; the first authentic statistical account of the country was drawn up; and, in fact, almost every salutary law and regulation in existence prior to the Revolution, may be traced to his enlightened and disinterested administration.

We have now arrived at a more delicate and difficult part of our task, which is to give a sketch, so far as our materials will serve us, of the Mexican Revolution.

Mexico, like Chili, has been twice revolutionised. The first struggle commenced in September 1810, and was carried on with various success till July 1819, when the cause of the patriots was almost annihilated. The second originated with Iturbidé in February 1821, and has happily terminated in the establishment of the national independence. In order to form an adequate idea of the causes and consequences of the Revolution, it will be necessary to take a general view of the colonial system which it has abolished.

COLONIAL SYSTEM OF SPAIN.

"SPAIN," it has been remarked by an able writer, "formed her colonial establishments in America at that dark period which preceded by more than a century the date of the English plantations. The excitement which the incipient reformation of religion had created in the north of Europe, was scarcely felt in Spain, or was suppressed by that horrible tribunal the Inquisition, or counteracted by that strange mixture of superstition and chivalry which produced the crusades, and

which had been kept alive in the Peninsula by the re-iterated and ultimately successful efforts to extirpate the Moorish power. Their religion, and the feelings which it excited, constituted a species of knight-errantry, which led them to fight for the beauty of a mistress, the honour of St. Jago, or the immaculate conception of the Holy Virgin, with equal pertinacity and ferocity. Imbued with such feelings to an intensity now scarcely conceivable, the expeditions to America were composed of soldiers, stimulated, in addition, by an ardent thirst for that gold in which the newly-discovered countries were represented to abound; they spread devastation wherever they marched, and inflicted on the simple and uncultivated natives, tortures and sufferings, differing little, except in duration, from those pains which the priests who accompanied them announced as awaiting the wretched victims in another world.

"As the Spaniards brought with them from Europe few or no females, they speedily formed connections with the wives or daughters of those whom they had sacrificed. Hence has arisen a race proud of the imagined dignity of their male ancestors, and uniting with it much of the apathy and want of sensibility which distinguished the aborigines of America. Spain became early aware of the kind of population which was thus scattered over its boundless dominions. It sent them troops of priests to continue among the emigrants, and to propagate among the natives, that blind submission in spiritual matters, which she fancied would equally secure civil dependence. Few of the colonists were allowed to carry arms; hence, after the lapse of more than a century, the settlers were so little prepared for defence, that they became the easy prey of those bands of sanguinary and lawless ruffians,

known by the name of Buccaneers, who looked only to plunder, and thought of no permanent establishments.

" The same anxiety to retain subjection, which had induced the court of Spain to leave the colonies defenceless, was extended to every branch of policy. Not only were viceroys and other chief governors sent from Europe, but all the judges, supreme and subordinate— all the administrators of revenue and expenditure— the members of the municipal corporations — the officers of the police — the inquisitors and their inferiors or familiars, were nominated by Spain. Thus, whilst the natives were not likely to be called upon to exercise any public functions, they had no inducements, even if they had enjoyed the means of instruction, to qualify themselves for the discharge of the lowest public services in society. The laws were unknown to all but the Europeans who presided in the courts of judicature; and by the Americans were supposed to be strained or interpreted in such a way as to favour those natives of the Peninsula who were settled amongst them.

" The only institutions they venerated were those of a superstitious nature. The only object to which they looked up with respect, was Spain and its monarch. The only subject of pride which they dwelt upon with complacency, was that they were Spaniards. They believed, for it had been artfully and sedulously impressed on their minds, that the King of Spain was the chief monarch of the universe, in whose dominions the sun never set; and that France, England, Italy, and the other countries of Europe, were tributaries to the nation of which they formed a part. The lowest of the Creoles, if but a tenth part of the blood that circulated in their veins was of Spanish origin, would

exclaim, *somos Espanioles*, with a tone and emphasis that bespoke a sense of the dignity which they imagined to be derived from that nation.

"The portions of literature and science that existed in the Peninsula were very insignificant. From the reign of Charles V. down to the present day, whilst England, France, Germany, and even Italy, had been steadily advancing in every species of knowledge, and in every art that contributed to promote the comforts, the enjoyments, and the wealth of their several communities, the sluggish pace which Spain maintained, kept her at a constantly increasing distance behind them. Of the scanty portion of knowledge scattered in the Peninsula, a few faint sparks alone have ever illuminated the gloom of their transatlantic dominions.

"The settlements were mostly formed in a warmer climate than the districts occupied by the English colonists. In such climates, the sea-shores are generally found to be unhealthy, and hence the thickest peopled parts of the Spanish dominions were on the elevated plains, at a distance from the sea. The cities of Mexico, Guadalaxara, Guanaxuato, Bogota, Quito, Cuzco, and St. Jago, are in the interior of their respective provinces; and the communication between them and Europe was difficult, hazardous, and protracted, even without noticing the various impediments and restrictions which the European metropolis interposed to favour the commercial monopolies of a few of her favoured cities. The intercourse between the several provinces of America was so restricted and guarded, that any knowledge or discoveries originating in one, could scarcely be communicated to the others, and the commodities furnished by some, were not

allowed to be supplied to their brother colonists, who might require them.

"Such, with a few variations, and with slight exceptions, had been the condition of Spanish America from the first year of its settlement, till the moment when, by the treachery of France, and the folly of the Junta of Spain, it was set loose from all existing government, and left to itself to construct, with such wretched materials as the country could furnish, the edifice of social society."*

The Spanish American possessions were never considered in the light of colonies, strictly speaking, but rather as forming a separate kingdom held in fief by the Crown in virtue of a grant from the Pope; governed by the monarch, assisted by a special board named the Council of the Indies; and having its separate code of laws.† Each viceroyalty or captain-generalship was independent of the others, and all were immediately under the King and the Council of the Indies. The viceroy was nominally controlled by the council called the *Audienza*, the members of which were European Spaniards, who were not allowed to hold lands or to marry in the country. This body had the privilege of remonstrating with the

* Quarterly Review, No. lxi. pp. 4—6.

† Hence the Kings of Spain assumed the title of King of the Indies. The "laws of the Indies" enacted by Charles V. were, for the most part, wise and equitable; and the regulations relating to the Indians were framed in the spirit of humanity. The aborigines were to be considered as free men and vassals of the crown. It was also enacted, that the discoverers, the settlers, their posterity, and *those born in the country*, should be preferred before all others, in all appointments, civil and ecclesiastical. These laws have never, we believe, been formally repealed, but they were never acted upon; the policy of the government having led to the adoption of a system diametrically opposite from the very first.

viceroy and of corresponding directly with the Council of the Indies; but its efficiency as a check was wholly neutralised by the inordinate power of the viceroy. The principle on which the whole complex fabric of the government rested, was, that no single department should be allowed to act without being checked by some other. With this view, the number of official authorities in every department of administration was multiplied beyond example, for every new office required the creation of a dozen other appointments to watch it. Neither worth nor talent was thought of in nominating to these appointments. The colonial offices were sold in Madrid, and the proceeds formed, at one time, no inconsiderable item in the royal revenues. All public offices and employments were confined to Spaniards; for although Americans were not excluded by the laws, they very rarely succeeded in obtaining appointments, and even then, not without satiating the cupidity of the court of Spain by enormous sums of money. It has been already mentioned, that, of fifty viceroys of Mexico, only one was an American. The manifesto put forth by the Congress of Buenos Ayres, states, that, of one hundred and seventy viceroys that had governed in Spanish America, four only were Americans; and of six hundred and ten captains-general and governors, all but fourteen were Spaniards. The same took place in every post of importance; and even among the common clerks of office, it was rare to meet with Americans.

"Every thing," it is added, "was disposed on the part of Spain, in America, to effect the degradation of her sons. It did not suit the policy of Spain, that sages should rise up amongst us; fearful lest men of genius should remind them of advancing the condition

of their country, and of improving the morals and excellent capacities with which its sons have been gifted by their Creator. It was her policy incessantly to diminish and depress our population, lest one day we should imagine aught against her domination, guarded by a force too contemptible for keeping in subjection regions so various and vast. Commerce was exclusively confined to herself, from a mean suspicion that opulence would make us proud, and render us capable of aspiring to free ourselves from so many vexations. The growth of industry was checked, in order that the means of escaping from our wretchedness and poverty might be denied us; and we were excluded from all participation in public employments, in order that the natives of the Peninsula might have entire influence over the country, so as to form the inclinations and habits necessary for retaining us in a state of dependence, that would neither permit us to think nor to act but in conformity to the modes dictated by the Spaniards.

"This system was acted upon with the utmost rigour by the viceroys. Each of them was invested with the authority of a vizier: their power was sufficient to annihilate all those who dared to displease them. However great the vexations they practised, we had to bear them with patience, while these were compared by their satellites and worshippers to the effects of the wrath of God. The complaints which were addressed to the throne were either lost in the distance of many thousand leagues, over which they had to pass, or they were smothered in the offices at Madrid by the protectors of those who tyrannised over us. Not only was this system not softened, but there was no hope of its moderating in the course of time. We had no voice, direct or indirect, in legis-

lating for our country: this was done for us in Spain, without conceding to us the privilege of sending delegates or counsellors, to be present, and to state what would be suitable or otherwise, as is practised by the cities of Spain. Neither did we possess such influence in the government set over us, as might serve to temper the severity of its administration. We knew that there was no remedy for us but to bear with patience; and that for him who could not resign himself to every abuse, death was considered as too light a punishment: for, in such cases, punishments have been invented of unheard-of cruelty, and revolting to every sentiment of humanity."

Not only did the Spanish Government thus exclude the natives from every office of trust, and bar up all the avenues to honourable distinction, but it opposed or discouraged their engaging in any branch of productive industry, while literature and every species of knowledge were rigorously interdicted. "It was forbidden," says the same manifesto, "to teach us the liberal sciences: we were permitted only to learn the Latin grammar, the philosophy of the schools, civil and ecclesiastical jurisprudence. The viceroy Don Joaquim Pinto gave great offence by permitting a nautical school at Buenos Ayres; and in compliance with a mandate from the court, it was ordered to be shut. At the same time, it was strictly prohibited to send our youth to Paris for the purpose of studying the science of chemistry, in order to teach it on their return." The natives were forbidden, upon pain of death, to trade with foreigners, none of whom were allowed to visit the country. Spaniards themselves could not set foot in the colonies without special permission, and for a limited time; and even the inhabitants of the different provinces were denied, as far as it was pos-

sible, all intercourse with one another, lest by mutual communication they should increase their knowledge. No South American could own a ship, nor could a cargo be consigned to him. No capital, not Spanish, was permitted to be in any shape employed in the colonies. Orders were given that no foreign vessel, on any pretence whatsoever, should touch at a South American port; and even ships in distress were ordered to be seized as prizes, and the crews imprisoned, in conformity to the royal ordinance of Nov. 1692.* Agriculture was subjected to the most arbitrary and injurious restrictions. The Americans were prevented by severe penalties from raising flax, hemp, or saffron. The cultivation of the olive, the mulberry, and the vine, if not formally interdicted by the laws, was indirectly frustrated by the same injurious policy. During M. Humboldt's stay at Mexico in 1802, the Viceroy received orders from the Court of Madrid to root up all the vines in the northern provinces, because the merchants of Cadiz complained of a diminution in the consumption of Spanish wines. "Happily," says that traveller, "this order, like many others issued by the ministers, was never executed. It was judged that, notwithstanding the extreme patience of the Mexican people, it might be dangerous to drive them to despair, by laying waste their property, and forcing them to purchase from the monopolists of Europe, what the bounty of nature produces on the Mexican soil."

* The rigour with which this inhuman law was enforced, is proved by a curious state paper which fell into the hands of the patriots at Lima. In this document, the viceroy expresses his high displeasure against the governor of the island of Juan Fernandez for *not* seizing a Boston trader which had touched there in distress, having lost one of her masts, sprung her rudder, and run short of water and firewood.—See Capt. Basil Hall's Journal, vol. i. p. 306. (3d edit.)

Captain Basil Hall was informed when at Tepic, that a measure of a similar description had been actually carried into effect in New Galicia, in the case of some extensive and flourishing tobacco plantations.* At Buenos Ayres, indeed, they were allowed to cultivate grapes and olives, by special permission, but only in sufficient quantity for the table. The commerce of wines and of indigenous oils was tolerated in Peru and Chili; but this apparent exception to the general policy was dictated by fear: those colonies, situated beyond Cape Horn, were frequently ill provisioned from Europe, and the effect of vexatious measures was dreaded in provinces so remote. A system of the most odious prohibitions was obstinately adhered to, in all the colonies bordering on the Atlantic.†

Such principles as prescribe the rooting up of the vine and the olive, are not calculated to favour manufactures. "The new colonies," remarks M. Humboldt, "were not established among people altogether barbarians. Before the arrival of the Spaniards, the Indians were already clothed, in the cordilleras of Mexico, Peru, and Quito. Men who knew the process of weaving cotton, or spinning the wool of the llamas and vicunas, were easily taught to manufacture cloth; and this manufacture was established at Cuzco in Peru, and Tezcuco in Mexico, a few years after the conquest of those countries, on the introduction of European sheep into America." The Court of Madrid

* In New Spain, the manufacture of tobacco was a royal right.

† "There exists," says Humboldt, "but a single olive plantation in all New Spain, the beautiful one of the Archbishop of Mexico, two leagues S.E. of the capital." Yet, were the Mexicans to be at complete liberty in the cultivation of the soil, he tells us, they would in time be able to dispense with the oil, wine, hemp, and flax of Europe.

was compelled to relax its prohibitory system with regard to these manufactures, amd to tolerate what it was unable to prevent. M. Humboldt states, however, that the Government, so far from encouraging manufactures, even employed indirect means to prevent the establishment of those of silk,* paper, and crystal, although no decree of the *Audienza* prohibited them. "Only half a century ago," he says, "the Count de Gijon and the Marquis de Maenza conceived the project of bringing over to Quito, a colony of workmen and artizans from Europe. The Spanish ministry affected to applaud their zeal; but they contrived so to fetter the proceedings of these two enterprising individuals, that they at last perceived that secret orders had been given to the Viceroy and the *Audienza* to ruin their undertaking, which they voluntarily renounced." Thus, to the interests of a few maritime towns in Spain, the ministry never scrupled to sacrifice the interests of a whole continent.†

* The cultivation of the mulberry, and the rearing of silk-worms, were introduced by the care of Cortes, a few years after the siege of Tenochtitlan. There is a mulberry-tree on the ridge of the Cordilleras, peculiar to the equinoctial regions. The white mulberry of China had become common in Mexico about the middle of the sixteenth century. A considerable quantity of silk was then produced in the intendency of Puebla, in the environs of Panuco, and in the province of Oaxaca, where several villages of the *Misteca* still bear the names of *Tepexe de la Seda* (silk), and *San Francisco de la Seda*. Excellent taffeta was there manufactured with Mexican silk. "But," says Humboldt, "the policy of the Council of the Indies, constantly unfavourable to the manufactures of Mexico, on the one hand, and, on the other, the interest which the Philippine Company have in selling the Asiatic silk to the Mexicans, seem to be the principal causes of the gradual annihilation of this branch of colonial industry."—*Pol. Essay*, vol. iii. p. 57.

† Notwithstanding all these obstacles, manufactures had not been prevented, we are told, from making some progress in Mexico

"The sole purpose for which the Americans existed," says the intelligent English traveller already cited, "was held to be that of collecting together the precious metals for the Spaniards. If the wild horses and cattle which overrun the country could have been trained to perform the same office, the inhabitants might have been altogether dispensed with, and the colonial system would have been perfect. Unfortunately, however, for this system, the Spanish Americans, notwithstanding the net-work of chains by which they were enveloped, had still some sparks of humanity left; and, in spite of all their degradation, longed earnestly for the enjoyments suitable to their nature; and, finding that the Spaniards neither could nor would furnish them with an adequate supply, they invited the assistance of other nations. To this call other nations were not slow to listen; and, in process of time, there was established one of the most extraordinary systems of organised smuggling which the world ever saw. This was known under the name of the contraband or forced trade, and was carried on in armed vessels, well manned, and prepared to fight their way to the coast, and to resist, as they often did with effect, the *guarda-costas*, or coast-blockades, of Spain. This singular system of warlike commerce was conducted by the Dutch, Portuguese, French, English, and, latterly, by the North Americans. In this way, goods to an immense value were distributed over South America;

during three centuries: Biscayans, Catalonians, Asturians, and Valencians, have settled in the New World, carrying thither the industry of their native provinces. M. Humboldt estimates the value of the produce of manufacturing industry in New Spain (in 1802) at above a million and a half sterling; but the capital thus employed was Spanish, not Mexican.

and although the prices were necessarily high, and the supply precarious, that taste for the comforts and luxuries of European invention was first encouraged, which afterwards operated so powerfully in giving a steady and intelligible motive to the efforts of the patriots in their struggles with the mother country. Along with the goods which the contraband trade forced into the colonies, no small portion of knowledge found entrance, in spite of the increased exertions of the Inquisition, and church influence, aided by the redoubled vigilance of Government, who enforced every penalty with the utmost rigour. Many foreigners, too, by means of bribes and other arts, succeeded in getting into the country, so that the progress of intelligence was gradually encouraged, to the utter despair of the Spaniards, who knew no other method of governing the colonies but that of force, unsupported by the least shadow of opinion or good-will." *

The civil, fiscal, and criminal administration corresponded to the other parts of the political system.

* Captain B. Hall's Journal, vol. i. pp. 311-13. The author's remarks were intended to apply more particularly to South America; but the same system produced similar effects in all the Spanish colonies. The bad state of the eastern coast, the want of ports, and the inconvenience of landing, rendered the contraband trade more difficult to be carried on with Mexico, than with the coast of Terra Firma or Peru; and it was consequently confined almost entirely, Humboldt says, to the ports of Vera Cruz and Campeachy. Still it was very considerable, especially in time of war, when, the communication with the mother country being interrupted, the government was compelled to relax its prohibitory system, and to allow of commerce with neutrals. "During the last rupture with England," it is added, "the mother country could not introduce, from 1796 to 1801, at an average, more than 2,604,000 piasters worth of national and foreign commodities; and yet, in Mexico, the warehouses were encumbered with India muslins and English manufactures."—*Pol. Essay*, vol. iv. p. 95.

The exactions in the shape of taxes, duties, and tithes, were levied with a degree of severity unknown in any country, except, perhaps, in Spain. "The horrible *alcavala*, the most vexatious of taxes, as it is levied *ad infinitum* upon every transfer of goods, pressed heavily upon all classes. Nothing escaped the tithes; and every individual in the country was compelled annually to purchase a certain number of the pope's bulls, under a penalty of forfeiting various important advantages. A man, for instance, who had not in his possession the *Bula de Confesion*, could not receive absolution on his death-bed; his will became invalid, and his property was confiscated. Every stage of legal proceedings was in the most deplorable state that can possibly be conceived. The administration of justice had scarcely any existence whatsoever. There were forms enough, and writings enough, and long imprisonments without number; but," adds Captain Hall, "I never yet met with a single individual, either Spanish or American, in any of those countries, who did not freely admit, that substantial justice was in no case to be looked for, even where the Government had no interest in the event. What chance any one had when his cause involved a political question, it is needless to say. Imprisonment, that bitter torture, was the grand *recipe* for every thing. 'Sir,' said a man to me, who knew well, from long experience, what it was to be engaged in a South American law-suit, 'they put you into prison, whatever the case be — they turn the key, and never think more of you.' At the capture of Lima, the dungeons were found filled with prisoners long forgotten by the courts, and against whom no charge was upon record." *

* Hall's Journal, vol. i. pp. 300—302.

What was the state of the prisons, it is needless to say. The filth, the diet, the lodging — the naked ground, the irons, were all the same as in Spain, or, if possible, worse. In obscure, humid, infected dungeons, men and women, young and old, guilty and innocent, the hardened in crime and the first offender, the debtor and the robber, the patriot and the murderer, — all were confounded together. The *alcalde*, generally taken from the dregs of the people, was a kind of sultan, from whose decrees there was no appeal. Occasionally, torture was introduced, to wring from the unhappy prisoner the confession of a supposed, perhaps an imaginary crime; and in all the prisons, corporal punishment was allowed. *

In the treatment of foreigners, it could not be expected that any regard should be paid to either justice or humanity. An apprehension of the resentment of other governments alone prevented the strict enforcement, in every case, of the law which made it a capital offence for any foreigner to enter the Spanish dominions without a license; but the same end was answered by the most barbarous imprisonments. Sometimes the intruders, after being long confined in the colonial prisons, were sent to Spain, whence they were remitted to Ceuta, and were seldom heard of more. Sometimes they were sent as convicts to Malaga, or some other Spanish port, where they were forced to work in chains. "When the Spanish general Morillo captured Carthagena, he seized all the British and foreign merchants, threw them into dungeons, and would unquestionably have shot them all for a breach of the laws of the Indies, had it not

* Biblioteca Americana, No. 3, cited by Captain Hall. On this subject, Humboldt is dumb.

been for the timely interference of the British admiral on the West India station."* What would be the horrors attendant on a revolutionary struggle in countries thus circumstanced, it required no supernatural foresight to anticipate. Too often has civil war been found to suspend altogether the influence of the laws, and seemed to set men loose from every religious obligation. But here the laws, so far as regarded any moral influence, were a nullity; and such was the character of the religion, that both the principles and the manners of the Spanish Americans are thought to have received their deepest stain from this source. When once, therefore, the single restraint of fear was removed, no controlling principle was left. It was the struggle of the tyrant and the slave, in which no generous feeling, no relenting, no compromise can have place: one party must be exterminated. The Mexican revolution is, indeed, a tale of horror and of crime, but it has terminated well for the interests of mankind.†

* Hall's Journal, vol. i. p. 292.

† The above description of the colonial system is given on the authority chiefly of Humboldt, who dedicates his work to the King of Spain; of Captain Basil Hall; and of the Buenos Ayres manifesto. It may be proper to notice, that Captain Hall's statement has been termed exaggerated by a writer in the Quarterly Review, who apologises for the system on the ground that England, France, Holland, and Portugal, like Spain, excluded their colonies from all commercial intercourse with other countries. "The governors, commanders of the forces, and other elevated officers, were as generally chosen from Europe by those governments, as by the court of Madrid. It was the weak policy of the parent states to discourage the production of such commodities in the colonies as they imagined would rival their own. And if the old principle, that 'the colonies existed only for the benefit of the mother country,' *was not acted up to as extensively by others as by the Spaniards*, we must make some allowance for those who had

HISTORY OF THE FIRST REVOLUTIONARY WAR.

THE immediate occasion of the first revolutionary movements in Mexico, as at Buenos Ayres,* was the invasion of Spain by Napoleon. On the first intelligence, no other sentiment was excited, than a general burst of indignation against the French, and Ferdinand was proclaimed with every demonstration of ardent loyalty. After the occurrences at Bayonne, and the occupation of Madrid by the French, a strong party was formed among the European Spaniards in favour of King Joseph, whose emissaries spread themselves over the colonies; but the Creoles universally remained faithful to the legitimate monarch, and publicly burned the proclamations inviting them to transfer their allegiance to the French. The first rising of the colonists was dictated by this very feeling; and it was in consequence of the determination expressed by the Americans of the Caraccas to hold their country for their rightful sovereign, that the Cadiz Regency declared war against that captain-generalship

suffered severely from the buccaneers, and whose chief productions, gold and silver, were peculiarly calculated to excite the activity of numerous adventurers. In those particulars in which the Spanish colonial system *was worse than that of other nations*, the excess of evil may be traced to the religious feelings created and upheld in Spain by the abominable institution (the Inquisition) which bound in chains of darkness the minds of the court, the nobility, the army, the clergy, and even the inquisitors themselves." (*Quart. Review*, No. lx. p. 445.) The reader will not fail to perceive, that this statement confirms in every important particular the accuracy of Captain Hall's representation, which is, indeed, substantiated by Humboldt himself. The writer goes further indeed, by admitting that the Spanish colonial system was worse even than that of the Portuguese or of the Dutch.

* Mod. Traveller. Brazil and Buenos Ayres, vol. ii. p. 316.

in August 1810. The Viceroy of Mexico at this critical period was Don Jose Iturrigaray, who is universally characterised as a just and good man, and he is still spoken of with respect by the Mexicans. The contradictory orders which he received from the King, from Murat, and from the Council of the Indies, together with the violence of the opposite factions, placed him in so embarrassing a situation, that he proposed, as the best means of preserving the country from the horrors of anarchy, to call a *junta*, to be formed by a representation from each province, in order to frame a provisional government in which the people might have confidence. The purity of his intentions is generally acknowledged, and he was cordially supported by the *cabildo*; but the Europeans in the capital viewed the scheme with great jealousy, as it tended to place the Creoles upon an equal footing with themselves in the government of the country, and they determined to frustrate it by a bold measure. Privately arming themselves, they arrested the unsuspecting viceroy in his palace, on the night of the 15th of September, 1808, and sent him and his family prisoners to Spain, assuming themselves the reins of government.* This act excited universal indignation among all classes of Americans, but it

* It is stated by a writer in the Quarterly Review, who stigmatises Iturrigaray as a feeble and vacillating old man, that the conspirators issued a proclamation against him accusing him of heresy; while the charge transmitted with him to the Junta of Seville, was not heresy, but a design to establish himself on an independent throne. "He was committed to one of the dungeons of that city without trial and without examination. At the end of *three years*, he was liberated by a general amnesty."—*Quart. Review*, No. lix. p. 172.

met with high approbation from the Spanish Government; and the new viceroy, Venegas, brought with him rewards and distinctions for those who had been most conspicuous in this revolt against the authority of Iturrigaray. These circumstances, together with the subsequent massacre of several distinguished Americans, and the arrest and banishment of others, on the charge of having espoused the late viceroy's plans, deeply incensed the nation; and a conspiracy was formed against the new governor, which is said to have extended to every part of the kingdom, many of the most distinguished ecclesiastics and lawyers being engaged in it. It had nearly reached maturity, when the whole plan, together with the names of the conspirators, was disclosed by Iturriaga, a canon of Valladolid, on his death-bed, to a priest of Queretaro. In consequence of this disclosure, the corregidor of that city, who was included in the denunciation, was arrested in the night. This act spread the alarm among the principal conspirators, and hastened the execution of the plot, or rather, left no alternative but submission or open rebellion. Unhappily, the first individual who raised the standard of revolt, was a man wholly incompetent to direct the popular movement. He was a priest, named Hidalgo, the rector of Dolores, in the province of Guanaxuato; a man of some talent, an enthusiast in the cause of independence, and possessing an unbounded influence over the Indians. From this last circumstance arose the criminal rashness and fatal impolicy of his first proceedings, to which the eventual failure of the revolutionists may in a great measure be ascribed. The war-cry of his followers was, "Destruction to the *Gachupins*,"—a word of contempt, said to be as old

as the days of Cortes;* and their first steps were marked by horrid excesses. It seemed that the old Mexican quarrel was about to be renewed, and that the spirit of Guatimozin had returned to earth, to lead them to revenge. In every place they passed through, all the European Spaniards that fell into their hands, and many Creoles, were massacred. A large portion of the half-cast population, who were as zealous as Hidalgo and his party for the emancipation of their country, were consequently led to tremble for their personal safety, and sought protection at the hands of their ancient oppressors. Nevertheless, the forces of Hidalgo continued rapidly to increase. He had been joined at Dolores by Captain Don Ignacio Allende, who commanded a small body of the king's troops at San Miguel el Grande. On the night of the 10th of September, 1810, the tocsin of revolt was sounded. They first marched from Dolores to San Miguel, where the Indians pillaged the houses of the Spaniards; and thence proceeded to Zelaya, where they were joined by the garrison and an immense throng of Indians, armed with clubs, slings, and other rude weapons. Hidalgo's army (if such a name may be applied to a heterogeneous mob without order or discipline) now consisted of 20,000 men, at the head of which he marched forward against the populous and wealthy city of Guanaxuato. Here, too, the garrison joined the insurgents, and the only opposition which

* The Spaniards say, that it means a man with two heads, and that it originated in the exclamation of the Indians on first discovering that the horse was a distinct animal from his rider. The story is, that one of Cortes's officers being slain, they expressed their surprise on a close examination of the phenomenon, by exclaiming *Gatzopin*. The Indians, however, deny the truth of the tale, and say that the word means robber.

was made, was by the Intendant, who shut himself up with some of the inhabitants, and a large amount of treasure, in the *Alhondiga*, a large, circular building in the centre of the city, which is used as a granary. Riana, the Intendant, was killed during the first attack, and the inhabitants soon after surrendered. By this capture, Hidalgo acquired five millions of dollars, besides the plunder which fell into the hands of his followers, who sacked the city, and slaughtered all the Spaniards.* He is said to have now paid his soldiers a dollar a day each.

From Guanaxuato, Hidalgo marched to Valladolid, gathering hourly an accession of Indians and some few royalist deserters. The revolt had by this time spread with electric rapidity, over the whole country north of Queretaro. Even in the city of Mexico, Puebla de los Angeles, and other places, the Spaniards began to tremble for their safety. It was a critical moment. "The forces of the government," Mr. Robinson says, "were entirely Creole; and if any conspicuous officer in either the city of Mexico or of Puebla, had then declared in favour of Hidalgo, the revolution would have succeeded. But the Creoles beheld with alarm their fate depending on an ignorant and infuriated body of Indians, from whom all

* Mr. Robinson, in his "Memoirs of the Mexican Revolution," states, that Hidalgo offered the Intendant and his party humane terms, but they refused to surrender, and the place was carried by storm. "The unfortunate Spaniards and all who adhered to them, were sacrificed by the infuriated Indians. In vain Hidalgo interposed to prevent the slaughter. The sacking of the city continued for three days, and the plunderers were loaded with doubloons, dollars, and ingots of gold and silver. The precious metals were found in some private houses, as well as in the public buildings, piled in vast heaps. The Indians afterwards offered their doubloons for sale at four reals each (half a dollar), conceiving that they were only gilt medals." — *Memoirs*, vol. i. p. 28.

classes of whites had as much to fear as the Spaniards, and it became their interest to rally round the viceroy."

On the 24th of October, Hidalgo was proclaimed generalissimo of the Mexican armies, on which occasion he threw aside his priest's robes, and appeared in uniform. From Indeparapeo, where this ceremony took place, the insurgent army marched towards the capital, and on the 27th entered Toluca, a town not more than twelve leagues west of the capital. In this extremity, the European authorities resorted to the spiritual weapons of the church. Hidalgo, his army, and all who espoused the cause of independence, were solemnly excommunicated by the archbishop. This act did not produce all the effect that was expected from it upon the immediate followers of Hidalgo. Being a priest himself, he easily persuaded his troops, that an excommunication pronounced by their enemies could not avail against them; but the people who were at a distance, abandoned a cause to which was attached so dreadful a penalty; and these fulminations are believed to have had a powerful tendency to paralyse the operations of the revolutionists. After some skirmishing between Toluca and Lerma, the independents, on the 31st of October, shewed themselves on the heights of Santa Fe. The royalists, not more than 2000 men, were drawn up to defend the city, when, to the astonishment of every one, Hidalgo withdrew his troops, taking the route to Guanaxuato. "This extraordinary movement," says the writer whose historical sketch we follow in this statement, "so fatal to the cause of the patriots, has never been accounted for." *

* Notes on Mexico. By a Citizen of the United States. 8vo. Philadelphia, 1824. Mr. Robinson states, that an action had

This retreat was attended with some confusion; and Don Felix Maria Calleja, who was actually on his march for the relief of the city at the time, at the head of 6000 men, now pursued Hidalgo so closely, as to bring on an action at Aculco. The Indians evinced a degree of valour entirely unexpected on the part of the royalists. They rushed with their clubs on the bayonets of the columns of the enemy, and fell in heaps. They were so ignorant of the effects of artillery, that, in the height of their enthusiasm, they fearlessly ran up to the cannon, and with their *sombreros de petate* (flag hats) endeavoured to stop up the muzzles of the guns. But the discipline of the royal troops prevailed; and Calleja, in his despatches, exults that the insurgents lost 10,000 men, of whom 5000 were deliberately put to the sword. Hidalgo retreated on Guanaxuato, whence he fell back upon the populous city of Guadalaxara, leaving Allende with

taken place between Hidalgo and a detachment of the city troops under Truxillo, at a place called Las Cruces, about eight leagues from the capital, in which the latter was compelled to retreat upon the city with the loss of his artillery and a number of troops. That Hidalgo then advanced to the *hacienda* of Quaximalpa, only five leagues distant from the capital, whence, instead of advancing to the assault, by which he might have decided the fate of the empire in twenty-four hours, he sent a summons to the viceroy to surrender the city. That to this demand no answer was returned, and Venegas contrived by emissaries to impress Hidalgo with the opinion, that the preparations for defence had rendered the city almost impregnable to a disorderly multitude without fire-arms. That Hidalgo was struck with a panic, and resolving to abandon the project of attacking the city, commenced a retreat, after remaining two or three days in sight of Mexico. The Quarterly Reviewer states, (without giving his authority,) that the viceroy, "besides the forces under Truxillo, had sent two detachments, one of which passed to the right, the other to the left, of the insurgent forces;" and that "the knowledge of their junction in his rear induced Hidalgo to retreat on Guanaxuato, to secure his resources."

the rear-guard to defend the defile of Marfil. Here he sustained an impetuous attack from Calleja, but, after an obstinate resistance, was compelled to retire with the remains of his troops upon Hidalgo. Calleja now entered Guanaxuato as a conqueror, and he determined to "purge the city of its rebellious population." Men, women, and children, were driven, by his orders, into the great square, where, to the number of several thousands, they were butchered in the most barbarous manner. Calleja states in his despatches, that it would have wasted too much powder and ball to have shot them, and therefore their throats were cut.*

This was only the commencement of a series of atrocious barbarities, committed by Calleja and his subalterns, in all the towns and villages of the Baxio. In the meantime, the royalists, under General Cruz, defeated the independents at Zamora, and recovered possession of Valladolid, where the inhabitants were treated with great cruelty.

Hidalgo's army, though he had lost at least 30,000 men in killed, prisoners, and deserters, was still nearly 80,000 strong. The heavy guns from the works at San Blas had been conveyed to Guadalaxara, and lines were thrown up which at least bore the appearance of fortifications. He drew up his army in an advantageous position at the *Puente* (bridge) *de Calderon*, eleven leagues from the city, and here resolved to wait the attack of Calleja. An obstinate battle was fought on the 17th of January, 1811, which ended in the total defeat and dispersion of the inde-

* Robinson, vol. i. p. 38.—The Quarterly Reviewer says, Calleja "retook Guanaxuato *by storm*, which was delivered up to *indiscriminate vengeance*." It appears to have been incapable of resistance.

pendents. Hidalgo, with some of his chief officers, escaped, and took the road for the internal provinces. After remaining a short time at Zacatecas, he retreated to San Luis Potosi, intending to retire to the Texas, and there re-organise his army. He was closely followed by Calleja, and by a division of Spanish troops which had arrived at Altamira. At the same time, the governor of the western internal provinces despatched a body of troops, under the command of Ochoa, to intercept his retreat. Thus hemmed in on all sides, he was betrayed by Bustamante, one of his own officers, and made prisoner with all his staff. They were suddenly attacked at Acatita de Bajan, near the Saltillo, on the 21st of March, and being taken by surprise, were easily vanquished. Fifty of his officers were executed on the field of battle. Hidalgo and Allende, with eight or ten others, were removed to Chihahua, where, after the form of a trial, Allende was shot on the 20th of June; Hidalgo, having previously been deprived of his priest's orders, on the 27th of July.

The command of the army left by Hidalgo was assumed by Rayon, a lawyer, who soon found himself at the head of 40,000 men. He attempted to negotiate, but the reply of Calleja rendered the attempt abortive. He formed a junta at Zitaquaro, and endeavoured to introduce some order and subordination among the independents, but was attacked here by Calleja, who, after an engagement which lasted three hours, succeeded in driving the parties from their posts, and in carrying the place. By a "solemn decree," the property of the inhabitants of this town was confiscated, and the town itself razed to the ground.

Notwithstanding these losses, the independents continued to carry on a desultory warfare. The junta

took refuge in Zultepec. The Cadiz Regency, at the end of November 1811, despatched a body of European troops to Mexico; but these were soon destroyed by the partisan warfare carried on by the Creoles and Indians. At length, the intendencies of Guanaxuato, Valladolid, Guadalaxara, Zacatecas, and parts of those of La Puebla, Vera Cruz, Mexico, and San Luis Potosi, were so far under the control of the patriots, that the royalists were penned up in a few fortified cities, and could not move beyond their walls, except with considerable armies. Still, though spread over a vast space of territory, the patriots were disunited: they were without any form of government that deserved the name, and each provincial chief acted as his judgement or interest dictated. They were miserably ignorant of the military art, destitute of artillery, their finances were under no regulation, and they were totally cut off from foreign intercourse. Things were in this state when Don Jose Maria Morelos began his military career by raising a body of troops in the western part of the province of Valladolid, bordering on the Pacific. This extraordinary man was a parish priest in one of the most populous districts in the neighbourhood of Acapulco. Whether he was the originator of this insurrection or not, does not appear, but he was soon declared its chief; and during nearly five years, he discovered talents in the exercise of his office, which extorted the applause of all to whom he was opposed. His standard was joined by many distinguished Creoles, and by numbers of deserters from the European troops. He had some tolerable officers, and succeeded, by great activity and perseverance, in organising and partially arming a body of 7000 men, well clothed, and more formidable from their discipline than even from their numbers. With this force,

he alarmed the Spaniards infinitely more than Hidalgo had done with his heterogeneous mass of a hundred and ten thousand. He had been victorious in several actions, when Calleja marched against him, and at length succeeded in driving him from Quautla Amilpa, a town which he had strongly fortified, but which the independents were compelled by famine to evacuate. They were closely pressed and harassed in their retreat by Calleja, who says, in his despatches to the viceroy, that "an extent of seven leagues was covered with the dead bodies of the enemy." The principal sufferers were the unarmed inhabitants of the town, who, warned by the fate of Zitaquaro, were eager to escape from the vindictive cruelties of the blood-thirsty Calleja. Such, however, was the unconquered spirit of the people, that Morelos was soon able again to act on the offensive. In the battle of Textla, he defeated the army sent against him under General Fuentes; after which he overran the whole southern and western parts of the kingdom, captured successively the towns of Chilapa, Tehuacan, Orizava, Oaxaca, Acapulco,* and, in fact, every important place in the viceroyalty,

* The population of Oaxaca received him with open arms, and thousands here joined his army. The head town soon fell into his hands, together with immense wealth. Acapulco was not reduced till after a siege of *fifteen months*. "Such was the cramped and distracted situation of the royalists at that time, that they could not command a force sufficient to attempt the relieving of Acapulco. Several Spanish officers have expressed their opinion, that the most critical epoch of the Revolution was just after Morelos had captured Acapulco."—ROBINSON, vol. i. p. 48. But Morelos does not appear to have been competent to improve his advantages. Had he at this crisis opened the ports to foreign commerce, he might easily have obtained a supply of arms and ammunition. But he had become too sanguine; he neglected alike to fortify the passes, and to secure the ports, and prematurely gave up his authority to a Mexican congress, who thwarted him, and ruined the cause.

except the capital, Vera Cruz, and Puebla de los Angelos. Guerillas under Guadalupe Victoria, extended over the whole country between Xalapa and Vera Cruz, occupying all the strong holds in that part of the country. Don Manuel Mier y Teran had a respectable force in the intendency of Puebla; Ossourno, with another division, was spreading terror and confusion in that of Mexico; while a priest named Coss, together with Rayon and other officers, occupied a great part of the intendencies of Guanaxuato, Valladolid, Zacatecas, and Guadalaxara. During these military transactions, the work of havoc never ceased. No quarter was given by either party.*

While the Europeans had military possession of the towns, which frequently changed masters, the open country was desolated by small bands of guerillas, who, if they owned, obeyed no superiors, who lived

* Mr. Robinson (who does not, however, conceal his leaning to the Revolutionists,) contends, that "the disgraceful and barbarous mode of warfare adopted in Mexico, had its origin solely in the outrageous decrees of the Spanish government, and in the conduct of the Spanish officers sent to execute those sanguinary decrees. All the offers of Hidalgo, Morelos, and other chiefs, to regulate an exchange of prisoners, and to prosecute the war according to the usages of civilised nations, were invariably treated with contempt by the royalists." The outrages and massacres committed by Hidalgo's Indians in the first rising, cannot, however, have the benefit of this apology. The Quarterly Reviewer, on the other hand, compiling his narrative chiefly from Spanish accounts, slurs over the cold-blooded massacres of the defenceless population executed by Calleja, and represents the slaughter and devastation committed by the insurgents as exceeding in enormity every thing that history has recorded. One fact, however, stated by Robinson, if authenticated, would turn the scale: "Hundreds of European Spaniards are now living in Mexico, who were taken prisoners on the field of battle" (by Hidalgo and Morelos); "but there breathes scarcely a single insurgent taken under similar circumstances." The manifesto of the first Mexican congress makes also strongly in their favour, by the spirit which it breathes.

on the plunder of the country, and, without the least compunction, massacred every European that fell in their way. The royal troops, on their part, wherever they passed, marked their track by thousands of Indians hung on the trees by the sides of the road, and by the smoking ruins of the plantations they had burned. In many parts, the neglect of cultivation caused a scarcity of food, and epidemic diseases in no small degree contributed, by their extent, and aided by the numerous privations, to increase the sufferings and diminish the population of the country. The viceroy, in the capital, was scarcely able to correspond with the officers commanding the different bodies of troops in the provinces; his communication was frequently cut off from Vera Cruz, and sometimes for five or six months together; so that the arrival of stores from that place was not possible. The symptoms of insurrection within the capital became alarming, in spite of a police, which forbade more than three persons to meet together beyond the members of each family; and the Creoles and Indians within the viceregal residence, discovered by their insolent gestures their triumph at every success of the insurgents.

In the midst of his military successes, Morelos, anxious to divide a responsibility to which he felt unequal, convened a congress with a view to the formation of a civil government. It was composed of forty members, Don Jose Maria Liceaga president, and assembled at Apatzingan, in the intendency of Valladolid. A constitution was framed, which was accepted by the provinces in possession of the independents; and they shortly after made proposals to the royalists to suspend hostilities, and to enter into a treaty, which were rejected with scorn and insult. In this manifesto, as given by Mr. Robinson, it is remarkable, that the independ-

ents unequivocally profess their allegiance to Ferdinand VII., but demand a national congress, adopting the very principles of the Spanish Cortes, and claiming simply an independent representation as an integral but equal part of the same monarchy. They propose that, if the sword must decide the dispute, the rights of nations and of war, inviolable even among the most infidel and savage people, should in future be respected by both parties; that no prisoners should be killed in cold blood; that defenceless towns should not be devastated by fire and sword, nor the innocent be confounded with the guilty. As the independents were at this time the stronger party, the proposal of an armistice and a negotiation came from them with every appearance of sincerity. But the infamous Calleja was now appointed viceroy, with the title of Conde de Calderon; and the war was prosecuted against the independents with circumstances of the most barbarous and refined cruelty.

Morelos soon found that, by delegating the authority to a congress at this critical period, he had incalculably augmented the difficulties of his situation. Some intercepted despatches are said to have disclosed to him the weakness or treachery of several distinguished individuals. It is obvious, how wide a scope was given for the secret operations of intrigue among the members of such a legislative body. But, whether there was treachery or not, jealousies inevitably ensued. The general's military plans were made a matter of discussion in congress, and if not betrayed, they were frustrated. All confidence between the civil and military authorities was thus destroyed; and from this time, the latter were unfortunate, and the former became contemptible.

During the whole of the year 1813, though Calleja

received continued re-inforcements, they were insufficient to enable him to make head against Morelos. His attention had been in some measure drawn towards the northern intendencies, which had been invaded by Toledo, who had been a member of the Cortes in Cadiz; he was, however, defeated, and the remnant of his forces having fled to the United States, tranquillity in that quarter was for a short time restored. In the latter part of that year, Morelos made an unsuccessful attack on the city of Valladolid, which the royalists had retaken and strongly fortified. Having raised the siege, he retreated to Puruaran, where he was attacked by a division of the army of General Llano under the command of Iturbidé, and was for the first time defeated, after having been engaged in forty-six battles, great and small. Matamoros, his second in command, and 900 men, were made prisoners. This person, who, like Morelos, was a priest, had displayed throughout this contest great valour and considerable military talent. Morelos had recourse to both offers and menaces to save the life of his officer, but in vain. He was first degraded and then shot. Twenty-five prisoners shared his fate.

During the year 1814, Calleja and Morelos were constantly engaged in detached operations. Compelled to evacuate the intendency of Valladolid, Morelos resolved to transfer his head-quarters to the city of Tehuacan in the intendency of Puebla, where General Mier y Teran had a considerable division.* The congress, together with the most respectable inhabitants of that part of the country, accompanied the army; and the expedition of Morelos is said to have resem-

* Then a youth, Mr. Robinson says, of only twenty years of age: he was of a good family, and of an amiable character.

bled the emigration of a vast body of people, rather than the march of an army. The road for several leagues was covered with baggage waggons and mules, and no order was observed in the march. Morelos does not appear to have made the least calculation on being assaulted, and he continued his march for several days without opposition. The royalists, in the mean time, had intelligence, by means of spies, of all his movements, and their troops hovered about the crowd, without attacking it; until, learning that Morelos had proceeded in advance of the main body, with a small division of cavalry, and that he lay at a place called Tepecuacuilco, they pushed on, and attacked him there on the 5th of November, 1815. After a short combat, Morelos was taken prisoner; he was sent to Mexico, and delivered over to the Holy Office. That tribunal, after declaring him a heretic, and degrading him, gave him up to the military authority, which, in its turn, sentenced him to be shot in the back as a traitor. The sentence was carried into execution on the 22d of December, at San Christoval, in the environs of the capital.

The death of this extraordinary man was an irreparable loss, as he was the only patriot chief whose orders were implicitly obeyed. The members of the congress, after the capture of their general, pursued their route to Tehuacan, where they continued to exercise their doubtful authority, till Teran, now commander-in-chief, discovering or suspecting their intention to deprive him of the command, resolved on the bold step of forcibly dissolving the body; and in December 1815, he put them all under arrest. This arbitrary measure proved fatal to the cause of the patriots. The military commanders in the different provinces acted from that moment as inde-

pendent chiefs, without cordiality or concert; and there ensued a state of complete anarchy. Calleja, though re-inforced by fresh troops from the Peninsula, which enabled him to disperse all large bodies of the insurgents, complained, notwithstanding, that he had not strength enough to destroy them. This execrable savage was at length succeeded by Admiral Apodaca, a man of mild character, who had been ambassador in England. By his change of system, several of the independent leaders were detached from the cause.

Teran, of whom Mr. Robinson speaks in terms of high eulogy, with a force which never exceeded 1,500 men, held the city and district of Tehuacan in defiance of the royalists for more than two years. The place was at length invested by a powerful body of troops sent against it by the Viceroy Apodaca, and Teran was compelled to surrender, but on terms more favourable than had ever been before granted to any of the revolutionary chiefs. The articles of capitulation were in this instance honourably fulfilled. Victoria* was soon after driven from his fastnesses in the intendency of Vera Cruz, and was at the time supposed to be slain. Ossourno, whose only object in joining the patriots appears to have been plunder, accepted, together with his principal officers, the royal pardon. Rayon, after maintaining for eighteen months the fort of Copero in Valladolid, capitulated, not so much from necessity, as from disgust at the selfish conduct of the other chiefs, and the sanguinary character of the warfare. The frightful state of anarchy which ensued, is thus described by Mr. Robinson.

"Subsequently to those events, the royalists gradually reconquered many of the revolted districts;

* Now at the head of the Mexican Republic.

placing garrisons in every town and village, to awe the people into obedience to the royal authority. In this manner, they succeeded in forming a chain of fortifications from north to south, cutting off the communication between the patriots of the eastern and western provinces, who still roamed through the country in formidable bodies, but without co-operation among themselves.

"The direction of these revolutionary bodies, thenceforward, fell into the hands of the most illiterate of the Mexican population, men whose sole aim was power, that they might by its aid acquire wealth. Many of these people were, from common field-labourers, raised to the rank of colonels and brigadiers; their conduct became licentious and cruel in the extreme, and as several of them were daring and enterprising, they were equally dreaded by royalists and patriots.

"Men of education, principle, or talent, among the revolutionists, were no longer respected. Any attempts made by them to establish order, were decried as tending to despotism; while they were insulted, their property was taken from them, under the plea that the public service required it; their lives were threatened; and they dared not even murmur against the decrees of their tyrannical oppressors. Thus, on the one side, terrified by the conduct of their own party, and, on the other, allured by the flattering offers of the royalists, they at length sought safety under the banners of Spain."

Such was the posture of affairs when the younger Mina landed at Galvezton in November 1816.

Xavier Mina, the nephew of the celebrated Espoz y Mina, was a native of Navarre. At the commencement of the struggle in the Peninsula, he was a stu-

dent of Zaragoza. After the massacre of Madrid on the 2d of May, he abandoned his studies, and joined the army of the north of Spain as a volunteer. He distinguished himself at this early period by the most chivalrous exploits, in reward of which the junta of Seville conferred on him the rank of colonel, and soon after, that of commandant-general of Navarre. The junta of Arragon also appointed him commandant-general of Upper Arragon. But his brilliant career in the Peninsula was unfortunately cut short in the winter of 1810-11, when he fell, after an obstinate resistance against superior numbers, into the hands of the French. He remained shut up in the castle of Vincennes till the allied armies entered France, nor was he set at liberty until the general peace. Having been conspicuous members of the liberal party, the two Minas soon experienced the displeasure of the restored monarch. Xavier, however, was offered the command of the military forces in Mexico. He declined it, and knowing the consequences of such a refusal, retired into Navarre. He was subsequently arrested by orders of the French government near Bayonne, but was again liberated, and came to England, where he formed the resolution to devote himself to the cause of liberty in the western hemisphere. His character is thus briefly summed up by a writer not predisposed to over-estimate it: "This officer is represented by those who knew him, as a young man of great talent, as uniting energy with judgement, and as free from that ferocity which had distinguished many of the guerilla chiefs in the Peninsula." *

Mina left England with a small expedition in May

* Quarterly Review, No. lix. p. 178.

1816. After touching in the United States, where he received some succours, he landed at Galvezton, towards the latter end of November, but did not move forward till March 1817. The interval was occupied with organising his forces, and in a visit to New Orleans, for the purpose of personally completing some important arrangements. On the 16th of April, he pushed forward to a town on the river Santander, called Soto la Marina, which the garrison evacuated at his approach. Here he constructed a small fort, and leaving his military stores under the protection of a small garrison, on the 24th of May, took up his line of march for the interior. At this time, his whole force consisted of 308 men, officers included. He made several unsuccessful attempts to open a communication with the patriot general, Victoria. But the forces which he had brought with him were, in fact, too few to inspire confidence in those who were disposed to support him; and he was much weakened by the defection of several officers who had engaged in the enterprise, but had abandoned it from a conviction of its desperate character. Mina himself chiefly relied on the known disposition of the Mexican population. On the 8th of June, he encountered a body of the enemy near the town of Valle del Mais, and after a smart skirmish, routed them, and took possession of the town. Anxious to form a junction with the independents, he pushed forward the next day, and on the 14th, encamped at the hacienda de Peotillos. Here, the next morning, he was attacked by a very superior force, said to amount to 1,700 men, cavalry and infantry. Mina's troops defended themselves valiantly, and he proved himself a brave and skilful officer. The enemy were routed after sustaining a heavy loss; but his little army suffered a melancholy reduction in 56 killed

and wounded.* Continuing his march into the interior, on the 18th, he took, by assault, the town of Real del Pinos, which was garrisoned with 300 men.† On the 24th, he effected a junction with the patriots at Sombrero, after a march of more than 600 miles,‡ which he had accomplished in thirty-two days, during which his troops had endured with cheerfulness great fatigue and privations, frequently being two or three days without rations, had fought two severe battles, and taken one town. They arrived at Sombrero 269 rank and file.

From Sombrero, Mina sent despatches to the government, setting forth the object of his entering the country, and offering his services. He wrote likewise to Padre Torres, who bore the title of commander-in-chief. This ferocious brigand is portrayed by Mr. Robinson in the darkest colours. "He too was a priest. In the early stages of his career, he gave some proofs of valour; but he no sooner acquired power, than he displayed the character of a fiend. He was cruel, vindictive, and avaricious, sparing neither patriot nor royalist to gratify his passions. He levied impositions in the most arbitrary manner, upon every wealthy individual within the range of his command, and on the most frivolous pretexts had put to death

* It deserves mention, that Mina, finding himself compelled to leave behind four of his wounded, left a letter for the royalist commander, begging that he would pay the same attention to them as had been shewn to his own wounded; and Mina's request was scrupulously fulfilled.

† Pinos was carried without the loss of one man on the part of Mina. He allowed his men to plunder the town, but to respect the churches; and one of his troops being detected in sacrilege, was shot by his orders, as another had been at Soto la Marina.

‡ The distance from Soto la Marina to Sombrero is not more than half as much, but Mina had taken a circuitous route.

several persons whom he suspected of being hostile to him, or likely to become his rivals. Jealousy was a predominant feature in his character." With such a man, it was impossible that the generous and frank-hearted Mina should coalesce; and it was owing chiefly to his conduct that the enterprise failed.

When Mina discovered into what hands the patriotic cause had fallen, his chagrin and disappointment are said to have been extreme. But he still indulged the hope, that it would be found practicable to retrieve it from utter ruin. Having received information that some royalist forces were in the neighbourhood, amounting to 700 men, under the sanguinary ruffian Castañon, he left the fort to meet them. His troops, re-inforced by a guerilla under Ortiz, amounted to 400 men. On the 30th, they found the enemy drawn up at the hacienda de los Llanos, about five leagues from San Felipe. The royalists, unable to withstand the vigorous charge of Mina's troops, were routed, and fled in confusion, leaving more than half their number on the field of battle, besides more than 200 prisoners. Castañon himself was mortally wounded. Mina's loss is stated not to have exceeded seventeen in killed and wounded. After remaining a few days at Sombrero to refresh his troops, Mina, accompanied by Don Pedro Moreno, made an excursion as far as the hacienda of Xaral (or Jaral), twenty leagues from Guanaxuato. This place was surprised, and, by the capture, property to a considerable amount, belonging to the marquess who takes his title from this estate, fell into the hands of the patriots. They returned to Sombrero, where Mina received the unwelcome intelligence of the fall of Soto la Marina. After a determined resistance, it had surrendered, on the 15th of June, to the royalists under General Arredondo, on

the faith of conditions which were most shamefully violated. The greater part perished in the dungeons of San Juan de Ullua. *

* "The dungeon in the castle of San Juan de Ullua, on a small island opposite Vera Cruz, in which these victims were afterwards confined, cannot be compared with any other in the world. Situated about fourteen feet under the arches of the castle, a gloomy light can only be admitted by a small grating at the top. There is a constant humidity; and as the bottom of the dungeon is below the level of the sea, water oozes in, and has opened passages through which crabs find access. These were finally welcome visitors to the prisoners, serving them for occasional food. The number of persons confined in so small a space, soon produced a pestilential air, and disease became general among them. The sentinels, on opening the doors, frequently fainted on inhaling the horrid effluvia issuing from the dungeon. The daily allowance of food was four ounces of bread, three of rice, and three of beans. This, however, was frequently curtailed, and was cooked in so disgusting a manner, without salt, that nothing but extreme hunger could induce some of the prisoners to touch any thing but the bread. In vain they begged that the sick should be separated from those who still retained some remnant of health: they were all chained indiscriminately in pairs, and on opening the dungeon one morning, two were found dead in their chains.

"At length, when an order came to remove the sick, it was only executed in extreme cases, and even then, the victim was removed to the hospital in irons, which were never struck off till death had put an end to the miserable sufferer. There was one instance of such deliberate and savage cruelty, as to excite the indignation and reprehension of several Spanish officers.

"One of the prisoners, a citizen of the United States, had the skin of his leg chafed by the irons. From the want of dressings and wholesome aliment, the sore rapidly increased. The irritation and pressure of the iron caused the flesh and muscles to become completely ulcerated to the bone; the whole leg became a mass of putrefaction. Unavailing were his petitions to have the irons taken off; his groans and excruciating agonies at length so far arrested the attention of his keepers, that he was removed to the hospital. The physician, on examining the horrid state of the leg, immediately addressed a representation to the governor, stating, that unless the irons were removed, death would inevitably ensue. Upon *the margin* of the memorial, the governor wrote the following inhuman replication, and sent it to the officer of the guard:

Soon after the return of Mina from Jaral, a large division of the royalists, under Don Pasqual Liñan, invested Sombrero. After an obstinate defence, the independents were compelled to evacuate the place, and to cut their way through the enemy. Fifty only of Mina's troops survived this siege.* Mina himself had escaped from the fort some days before, in hopes of obtaining succour from Padre Torres; but before he could obtain any effectual assistance, the few survivors reached Los Remedios with the sad tidings that Sombrero had fallen, and that Liñan was advancing against Los Remedios. On the 27th, a division of his army made its appearance before that place, and the formal siege was commenced on the 31st. While Torres, with some of Mina's officers, remained to defend this strong position, Mina himself, at the head of 900 native troops, ill armed and ill trained, advanced towards Guanaxuato. He possessed himself of the *hacienda* of Biscocho and the town of San Luis la Paz, and attacked San Miguel el Grande; but learning that a strong body of the enemy were on the march to relieve the place, he thought it prudent to retire to the Valle de Santiago, then in the possession of the patriots. Here he soon found himself at the head of a thousand horse, with which he advanced to relieve Remedios. Finding his numbers insufficient, he retreated to the mountains near Guanaxuato, pursued by the royalists under Orrantia.

The royalists continued to press the siege of Los

' *Que los lleva, mientras respira ;' whilst he breathes, he shall wear them.* This barbarian was the Brigadier Don Juan Evia. In a few hours this victim of Spanish inhumanity expired."

* All the prisoners were shot by orders of Linan, a man of the same character as Calleja, without his abilities.

Remedios with great vigour, and Mina to harass them with his cavalry, and to cut off their supplies, until at length he was attacked at the *hacienda* of La Caxa by Orrantia, and completely defeated. He retreated to Pueblo Nuevo, a small town about four leagues from the scene of this disaster, where he rallied a few of the fugitives; but of those who escaped, the greater part returned to their respective homes. His only resource, in this state of things, was to proceed to Xauxilla, the seat of government of the independents, in the hope of inducing them to aid his future operations. Here he urged the expediency of attacking Guanaxuato, and, after some opposition, prevailed upon them to adopt his plan. Being furnished with some troops, he proceeded to the Valle de Santiago, where he found a small body of men from Xalapa waiting his arrival. The approach of the division of Orrantia compelled Mina to abandon the Valle; and, making a rapid march through the mountains, he descended in the rear of the enemy, and reached La Caxa. Here he mustered eleven hundred men, and marching all night across the country, he gained an unfrequented spot called La Mina de la Luz, where he was joined by some further re-inforcements; and his little army now amounted to fourteen hundred men. With this force, and without artillery, he made a gallant attempt on the city of Guanaxuato, which appears to have failed only from the want of discipline. His "Mexican cossacks" were altogether unfit for such service. During the attack, Ortiz, one of the patriot officers, having with part of his division gained the height on which stood the works of the extensive Valenciana mine, wantonly set fire to them; an act which highly incensed Mina. The men, who were accustomed to disperse to their

homes after every operation, did so on this occasion; and Mina proceeded, with a small guard, to the residence of a friend, at the *rancho del Venadito*, where he was thought to be secure from surprise. He was betrayed by a priest; the house was surrounded in the night by Orrantia's cavalry; and when the alarm was given in the morning, Mina, on appearing to inquire into the cause, was seized and carried away, pinioned, and with every mark of indignity. He was sent in irons to the head quarters of Liñan, before Los Remedios; and orders having been despatched by the viceroy for his immediate execution, he was shot on the 11th of November. Thus perished, in the twenty-eighth year of his age, this extraordinary youth. "His humanity," it has been remarked in terms of measured praise, "formed a most striking contrast with the brutal cruelty of his Mexican associates, and the more refined, but equally revengeful feelings exhibited by some of his royalist enemies." Properly speaking, however, he had no Mexican associates. The patriot leaders with whom he had hoped to co-operate, were all swept off, or incapacitated, and those who had succeeded to them, were either unable or indisposed to support him. Mina's enterprise unquestionably evinced more enthusiasm than judgement. It was undertaken with imperfect information, straitened funds, and insufficient force. He was disappointed of the assistance he expected to obtain in the United States, and this led to the desertion which weakened him at the outset.* But his pride would not suffer him to draw back. Then, two-thirds of his

* Fifty-one of his best soldiers deserted him under Colonel Perry, who withdrew in despondency or disgust. They were all cut off, except Perry, who, determined not to be made prisoner, shot himself.

men were foreigners, and he had not calculated on the disinclination of the natives to co-operate with heretics. A hundred of these, who might have rendered him good service, he imprudently left shut up in an untenable fortification at Soto la Marina. At the head of a thousand disciplined troops, he might have succeeded, even at the unpropitious moment at which he landed. But Mina was formed for a guerilla chieftain, rather than for a general leader. Brave, hardy, serene in the hour of danger, generous, affable, and humane, he united in himself the shining qualities of the soldier with the manners of the gentleman and the enthusiasm of the patriot. He would have been an invaluable auxiliary, though deficient as a general, and was worthy of a better cause and a happier fate.

When the capture of Mina was known, Te Deum was chanted in the churches of Mexico, and salutes of artillery, illuminations, and rejoicings, took place in every town in the possession of the royalists. The minutest particulars of his execution were published in the Gazette, with the certificate of the surgeon as to the very ball which caused his death. And so much importance did the Spanish Government attach to the event, that Apodaca was created *Conde del Venadito*, while Liñan and Orrantia received marks of distinction in reward of their services on this occasion.

The siege of Los Remedios was now pressed with renewed vigour; and Torres, finding the place no longer tenable, all the ammunition being expended, resolved to evacuate it. This was effected on the night of January 1, 1818; but was so badly conducted, that the greater part of the garrison perished, and the unarmed inhabitants, women and children,

were involved in one indiscriminate massacre. The acts of barbarity committed at Sombrero, did not equal in atrocity those at Los Remedios. The building in which the sick and wounded were crowded, was deliberately set fire to; and when any of the unfortunate victims made their appearance, who had strength enough to attempt to escape, they were thrust back or bayonetted. Among those who escaped, were Padre Torres, and twelve of Mina's division.

In the meantime, the little fortress of Xauxilla, in which the insurgent government held its sittings, had been invested by a body of 1000 men, under Don Matias Martin y Aguirre. The garrison defended the place with great bravery for three months, but was at length compelled to surrender. Aguirre displayed a conduct the reverse of that pursued by the other Spanish officers, and, after disarming the men and destroying the fort, set the prisoners at liberty, with the exception of two Americans, whose lives he with difficulty saved. The fugitive government had in the meantime transferred itself to the *Tierra Caliente* of Valladolid. In the month of February 1818, they were surprised by a party of the enemy, and the president was made prisoner. Nevertheless, a form of civil authority was still kept up, although the members were obliged to move from place to place; and they had at length spirit enough to give their sanction to the formal deposition of the infamous Padre Torres, who, by his tyrannical and sanguinary conduct, had rendered himself universally odious. Don Juan Arrago, a French officer who had accompanied Mina, was appointed to fill his place. The Padre, however, resisted this decree, and both parties took up arms. The advance of a royalist

division in September 1818 terminated the dispute: Torres was compelled to submit, and to place himself under the protection of his former friends.

In the month of July 1819,* the revolution had reached a lower ebb than at any previous period since the commencement of the struggle. The royalists occupied all the strong places and every town. Arago, however, still roamed over the mountains of Guanaxuato; and in the *Tierra Caliente* of the intendency of Valladolid, Don Vicente Guerrero, who, both during the life and after the death of Morelos, had distinguished himself by his courage and enterprise, continued at the head of a formidable guerilla. The other chiefs and leaders were dispersed throughout the country, awaiting a more favourable opportunity of renewing their efforts in the cause of independence. In the meantime, the great distance of the inhabited parts from each other, the numerous secure asylums which every district afforded, the habits of activity, abstinence, and endurance acquired by the mountaineers, and, above all, the general disaffection of the population to the Spanish government,—all united in counteracting the efforts of Apodaca to tranquillise the country, and enabled their chiefs to maintain their command and their opposition, till a new course of events raised one of them to supreme power, and the others to distinguished stations. †

* In March 1819, Bradburn, another of Mina's officers, who had organised a small force in the *Canadas de Huango*, was overtaken by a division of the royalists under Lara, and his party, with the exception of about thirty, including their leader, were all cut to pieces or shot. Of Mina's whole division, the only survivors in 1819, were Bradburn, Arago, three other officers, two soldiers, and two mulatto boys.

† At this period, Mr. Robinson's Memoirs of the Revolution terminate. Besides what he collected from personal observation,

SECOND REVOLUTION.

About the middle of 1820, accounts were received in Mexico of the revolution in Spain which followed the revolt of the army in the Isle of Leon; and it was soon made known, that orders had been sent to Apodaca, the viceroy, to proclaim the constitution to which Ferdinard VII. had been obliged to swear. "But it appears," says Captain Basil Hall, "that Apodaca and some of the principal generals, acting probably under secret orders from the King, resolved to resist the establishment of the constitution. New levies of troops were made by the government to suppress any attempt to declare it; and the whole country was gradually and almost insensibly roused into military action. The chief obstacle, as it was thought by these leaders, to the success of their plan, was the presence of General Don N. Armigo, whose attachment to the cause of the constitution was too well known to admit a doubt of his supporting it. He was, therefore, dismissed from the command of the military division stationed between Mexico and Acapolco; and in his place, Don Augustin Iturbidé was appointed; an officer who, during the former revolution, had adhered steadily to the interests of the King,

while in attendance on General Teran, his information was derived from native Creoles, the surviving officers of Mina's army, and Mr. Brush, who accompanied Mina from England to Mexico. Of the general authenticity of his Memoir, there is no room to doubt, although it may lie open to the charge of being an *ex parte* statement. With his account, the "Historical Sketch by a Citizen of the United States," and that given in the Quarterly Review, have been carefully collated, and the preceding narrative may therefore be considered as resting on three independent testimonies. In the remainder of our sketch, the latter two will be our chief authorities, in connexion with the valuable information communicated by Captain Basil Hall.

though he was a native of Mexico. He had been privy to the secret project above alluded to, of forcibly resisting the proclamation of the constitution; and when he left Mexico in February 1821, to supersede Armigo, he was implicitly confided in by the viceroy, who appointed him to escort half a million of dollars destined for embarkation at Acapulco. Iturbidé, however, soon took possession of the money at a place called Iguala, about 120 miles from Mexico, and commenced the second Mexican Revolution, by publishing a paper, wherein he proposed to the viceroy, that a new form of government should be established, independent of the mother country."

Iturbidé would never have ventured on this bold and decisive step, had he not secured powerful support. The author of the Historical Sketch represents him as an instrument in the hands of the Mexican clergy, whom the decrees of the Cortes had converted universally into the champions of the national independence. They are stated to have taken an active part in organising the plan of operation by which the revolution was successfully effected; while the wealthy Europeans, influenced by different views, concurred in their plans, through a desire "to preserve the kingdom in the pureness of despotism, as a refuge to Ferdinand VII. from the persecutions of the Cortes." Iturbidé was commissioned by the viceroy to crush the remnant of the insurgent forces. Instead of this, he formed a conjunction with Guerrero, the patriot general, pretending, in his despatches, that his troops had accepted of the pardon offered by the viceroy to all who should, within a certain period, put themselves under the protection of the government. Emissaries had been despatched by the revolutionists in the capital to every part of the empire: and by the time

the armies reached Iguala, the people were every where ready to declare in favour of the national independence. On the 24th of February, 1821, the day after he had possessed himself of the treasure under his escort, Iturbidé proposed to the chiefs the scheme of government which bears the title of the Plan of Iguala: it was unanimously adopted, and was immediately transmitted to the viceroy, and to all the governors of provinces. The leading points of this plan are as follows:—

Article 1st maintains the Roman Catholic religion, to the entire exclusion *(intolerancia)* of any other.

2d—Declares New Spain independent of Old Spain, and of every other country.

3d—Defines the government to be a limited monarchy, regulated according to the spirit of the peculiar constitution adapted to the country.

4th—Proposes that the imperial crown of Mexico be offered first to Ferdinand VII.; and, in the event of his declining it, to the younger princes of that family, specifying that the representative government of New Spain shall have the power eventually to name the emperor, if these princes shall also refuse. Article 8th points this out more explicitly.

5th, 6th, and 7th articles relate to the details of duties belonging to the provisional government, which is to consist of a junta and a regency, till the Cortes or Congress be assembled at Mexico.

9th — The government is to be supported by an army, which shall bear the name of "The Army of the Three Guarantees." These guarantees, it appears by the 16th article, are, 1st, The religion in its present pure state; 2d, The independence; and 3d, The union of Americans and Spaniards in the country.

10th and 11th — relate to the duties of a congress,

with respect to the formation of a constitution on the principles of this "plan."

12th — Declares every inhabitant of New Spain a citizen thereof, of whatever country he be; and renders every man eligible to every office without exception, even of Africans. A subsequent modification of this article excluded slaves.

13th — Secures persons and property.

14th — Gives strong assurances of maintaining untouched the privileges and immunities of the church.

15th — Promises not to remove individuals from their present offices.

16th — See 9th.

17th, 18th, 19th, and 20th, relate to the formation of the army, and other military details.

21st — Declares that until new laws be framed, those of the present Spanish constitution are to be in force.

22d — Declares treason against the independence to be second only to sacrilege.

23d — To the same effect.

24th — Points out that the Cortes, or sovereign congress, is to be a constituent assembly, to hold its sessions in Mexico, and not in Madrid.

The first intimation received by the viceroy Apodaca, of the defection of Iturbidé, and of the force under his command, was the promulgation of the Plan of Iguala, on which he used every means in his power to frustrate the plans of the revolutionists, and to prepare for defence. But the royalists, either believing that he wanted sufficient energy of character for such a crisis, or dissatisfied with his measures, deposed him, and placed an officer of artillery, Don Francisco Novella, at the head of the government. The Europeans

were startled by the establishment of a cortes, and the avowal of an intention to control the monarch; but they were informed that such a provision was necessary to reconcile the Creoles to the plan: and, as the clergy were satisfied, they were compelled to submit. On the 1st of March, Iturbidé assembled the officers of his army, and submitted to them his plan. He exposed his views, and laid before them the resources and means he possessed of carrying them into effect; and after assuring them that they were at liberty to act as they might think proper, he urged them to give their opinions. He was interrupted by shouts and *vivas* from the officers, who not only approved the plan, but insisted upon creating him lieutenant-general, that he might lead them at once to the capital, and enforce its observance. Iturbidé declined the promotion, and recommended to them the greatest moderation, declaring it to be his intention not to proceed to hostilities, until he had tried every means of negotiation. On the ensuing day, the army took an oath to maintain the Plan of Iguala, and on that occasion, Iturbidé addressed them in the following words: — "Soldiers, you have this day sworn to preserve the Catholic, Apostolic, and Roman religion; to protect the union of Europeans and Americans; to effect the independence of this empire; and on certain conditions to obey the King. This act will be applauded by foreign nations; your services will be gratefully acknowledged by your fellow-citizens; and your names will be inscribed in the temple of immortality. Yesterday I refused the title of lieutenant-general, which you would have conferred upon me; and now I renounce this distinction, (tearing from his sleeves the bands of lace which distinguished a colonel

in the Spanish service). To be ranked as your companion fills all my ambitious desires."

Several articles of the Plan were far from being universally acceptable. The Creoles were dissatisfied with its pledging them to receive a prince of the house of Bourbon as their monarch; and on the part of the royalists, there was a show of resistance in some of the provinces. But the public opinion, now no longer restrained by ecclesiastical influence, manifested itself so powerfully as to effect the revolution in every part of the empire, without bloodshed, and almost without a struggle. From Iguala, Iturbidé crossed over to the *Baxio*, the rich and fertile district situated between Guanaxuato and the capital. Among others, Guadalupe Victoria, who had resisted the royalists to the last, and who, since the dispersion of his forces, had been concealed in the mountains of Vera Cruz, joined him at San Juan del Rio.* The army of the Three Guarantees marched upon Queretaro, which, from its position, may be considered as the military key of the interior provinces, and gained immediate possession of the place. Here the army was formed into two divisions. One, commanded by Victoria, marched towards the capital, while the commander-in-chief made a rapid movement upon Pueblo, which was given up as soon as he appeared before it.

Things were in this state when, in August 1821, General O'Donoju arrived from Spain at Vera Cruz, vested with powers to supersede Apodaca. To his

* Victoria, while he had distinguished himself from the commencement of the revolution by his devotion to the cause of freedom, and by his valour, activity, and disinterested generosity, had won the hearts of the people by the strictest observance of the forms of the Roman Catholic religion.—*Hist. Sketch*, p. 267.

astonishment, he found the country he was sent to govern, no longer a colony of Spain, but an independent state. As he came furnished merely with a commission, without troops, and without money, he had no alternative but either to return to Spain, or to enter into negotiations with Iturbidé, whose forces commanded the road to the capital. He decided on the latter, and, to pave the way, issued a proclamation, breathing nothing but liberality and hearty congratulations to the good people of Mexico; "a most singular document," remarks Captain Hall, "to come from a Spanish viceroy, and one which it was next to madness to suppose that the Spanish government would ever acknowledge." Iturbidé, delighted to see this disposition on the part of O'Donoju to take things in such good part, invited him to a conference. The parties met at Cordova, where, after a short discussion, a treaty was signed on the 24th of August, by which O'Donoju fully recognised the Plan of Iguala. It was stipulated, that New Spain should be recognised as a sovereign and independent nation, under the title of the Mexican empire; that commissioners should be sent to Spain to offer the crown to Ferdinand VII.;* that, in the meantime, a provisional junta of government should be appointed, (of which O'Donoju consented to become a member,) who were to nominate a regency, in whom the executive power was to be vested till the vacant throne should be filled; and that a Cortes should be immediately elected and convened for the purpose of forming

* In case of his refusal, the crown was to be offered to his brother Don Carlos; on his refusal, to the infante Don Francisco de Paula; on his refusal, to Don Carlos Luis of Lucca; and, on his renunciation, it was to be conferred on the person whom the Cortes should nominate.

a constitution. General O'Donoju engaged also to use his influence to obtain the evacuation of the capital by the Peninsular troops, on the terms of an honourable capitulation. The accession of such a man to his party, was of incalculable importance to Iturbidé. It destroyed the hopes of those who, up to this moment, had looked for the re-establishment of the ancient order of things; and it was hailed, from one end of the country to the other, as a confirmation of the justness of the independent cause. The garrison was soon persuaded to surrender at O'Donoju's desire, and marched out of the capital with the honours of war to Toluca. On the 27th of September, the two generals entered together amid the triumphant shouts of the inhabitants. Conformably to the treaty of Cordova, a junta of thirty-six members was appointed, and by them a regency, consisting of five persons, was chosen, of which Iturbidé was made president. He was at the same time appointed admiral and generalissimo of the navy and army, and assigned a yearly salary of 120,000 dollars. At this moment, O'Donoju caught the yellow fever, and died, to the great sorrow of all parties.*

The attention of all classes was now directed to the convocation of a Cortes; and Iturbidé presented to the junta a plan, by which he proposed that two chambers should be constituted. The first was to be composed of twelve or fifteen clergymen, and an equal number of officers of the army, of one member to be chosen from each of the city councils of the different cities of the empire, and one from each territorial supreme court of justice. The second chamber,

* So says Captain Hall: the Quarterly Review states, that he died of a consumption.

from which all the classes composing the first were to be excluded, was to consist of deputies to be elected by the people, in the proportion of one for every fifty thousand souls. This plan, submitted to the junta in the name of the regency, was rejected; but in that which was finally adopted, the same proportion of representation to population was preserved, and it was directed, that those provinces which elected more than four members, should send one ecclesiastic, one military man, and one lawyer, so that all classes might be fairly represented.

The people, generally, were not satisfied with this plan; and a conspiracy was formed, at the head of which were Generals Bravo and Guadalupe Victoria, in order to compel the junta to adopt the mode of election pointed out by the Spanish constitution. This plot was revealed to Iturbidé on the eve of its execution; and the generals, together with several of the conspirators, were arrested and thrown into prison.

On the 24th of February, 1822, the congress met in the capital. Previously to the installation, the members were assembled in the cathedral, where they were compelled to bind themselves by an oath, to adhere to the Plan of Iguala, and to preserve inviolate every article of that compact; and immediately after this installation, they voluntarily and solemnly sanctioned that plan, by an unanimous vote in favour of each separate article. Their subsequent acts shew how little weight these pledges had upon their deliberations or conduct.

The Cortes was soon divided into three parties; the Bourbonists, or those who were *bonâ fide* in favour of the Plan of Iguala; the republicans, or those who were for establishing a liberal and republican form of

government, and who denied the right of the army to pledge the nation by the Plan of Iguala; and the friends of Iturbidé, who sought to secure wealth and rank by advancing him to the supreme authority. Among the Bourbonists were many enlightened and honourable men, who thought that to adopt the Plan of Iguala would prove the means not only of reconciling the Europeans to the revolution, but of checking the ambitious designs of Iturbidé, which had now become manifest, and of securing to the people free institutions and a limited monarchy, which they considered as best adapted to the circumstances of the country. The republican party thought the nation capable of governing itself, and justly feared that a prince of the house of Bourbon, the dispenser of rank and honours, with the means of corruption in his hands, and assisted by the clergy, would not long submit to be governed by a constitution, and would not hesitate, whenever he possessed the power, to deprive them of their chartered rights. Between these parties, the Iturbidists held the balance, and threw their weight into either scale, as best suited the object they had in view. Whenever it was thought necessary to counteract the tendency of the people in favour of a republic, they voted with the Bourbonists; and they supported the republican party whenever it was proposed to carry into effect that part of the Plan of Iguala, which called a prince of Spain to the throne of Mexico. But the Bourbonists and republicans soon found it necessary to unite, in order to counteract the ambitious projects of Iturbidé, who had removed to Tacubaya, with about four thousand men, whence he attempted to control all the measures of government. On the first joint meeting of the Regency and the Cortes, to the surprise of every one,

Iturbidé assumed the president's chair. The congress, however, asserted their rights, and he was compelled to resign it to the president of that body: and, although it was subsequently contended by his friends, that he had a right to preside over the deliberations of both bodies when sitting together, they failed to carry this point. From this moment commenced a struggle for power between the Cortes and Iturbidé, which terminated in the dissolution of that body. The principal subject of dispute was the frequent demands for money made by the executive, which, with the best intentions, the Cortes would have found great difficulty to meet. A civil war of twelve years had exhausted the resources of the country, and the expenses of the government had been very much increased since the adoption of the Plan of Iguala. The army had been augmented and the pay raised, and, in addition to the former ordinary expenses, they were burdened with the salaries of offices which were created by the revolution. The commander-in-chief received one hundred and twenty thousand dollars per annum, his father a pension of ten thousand, each of the ministers eight thousand, and members of Cortes a salary of three thousand. The frequent calls for money, the Cortes answered by remonstrances against the wasteful expenditure made by the Regency, and demands for an account of the disbursements of former appropriations, which had never been furnished. In this state of things, the army remained unpaid, and their discontent was augmented by the commander-in-chief, who, in order to exasperate them against the Cortes, published his manifesto and remonstrances, addressed from time to time to that body, setting forth the wants of the soldiers, and accusing the representatives of wilfully exposing the army,

which he styles "the most meritorious part of the community," to the greatest sufferings and privations, and the country to the most imminent danger, by refusing to furnish the executive with the necessary supplies.*

The royal garrison of Mexico, which, agreeably to the terms of their capitulation, was encamped at Toluca, attempted to take advantage of this state of things, and to effect a counter-revolution. The conspiracy was disclosed to Iturbidé, who took the necessary precautions to defeat it; and he seized upon this pretext to withdraw from the capital all the troops which were favourably disposed towards the Cortes,† or which might oppose his views. He then issued a proclamation, setting forth that the country was in danger, and summoning the Cortes to assemble at an early hour the next day.

* The Quarterly Reviewer says: "The elections were so managed by a party in the junta, that almost the whole of its members were chosen to seats in the congress." It would have been strange, indeed, if the members of the junta had not been elected. It is added: "When this body of deputies met, it appeared that not one of them was acquainted with the mode of conducting business in such an assembly. Day after day was spent in adjusting ceremonies, and in discussing trifles, while every branch of the government, ignorant of the limits of its own power, and fearful of exercising any authority until it had been sanctioned by the congress, was actually reduced to a state of torpidity. The people, finding that no remedy was administered to evils which certainly admitted of no speedy cure, became at first discontented, and then indignant. From August 1821, to April 1822, nothing, they said, had been done to promote their prosperity." Yet, one of the first, if not the very first edict of the congress, was to allow the export of specie at a duty of only three and a half per cent,—a measure long before promised by Iturbidé, and which gave great satisfaction. It by no means appears that the *people* were either discontented or indignant.

† One of these regiments had petitioned the Cortes to establish a republican form of government.

When the Cortes and the Regency met in conformity to this summons, to the surprise of every one, Yanez, a member of the Regency, in whose name the summons had been issued, rose, and demanded the cause of the alarm, with which, it then appeared, that Iturbidé alone was acquainted, and that he had, on his own responsibility, issued a proclamation in the name of the Regency. Yanez protested against this usurpation of authority on the part of the president, and ended by saying, that he and his colleagues acted merely as a screen; that, in fact, Iturbidé was the sole regent, and governed absolutely and despotically. Iturbidé, in his reply, accused Yanez of being a traitor to his country, and a personal enemy to him; and, in the course of this very tumultuous session, he declared that there were many members of the Cortes, who were not only his personal enemies, but traitors to their country, and to the cause of independence. He was loudly called upon to name them, and to exhibit his charges against them, and to bring forward his proofs. He instantly named several members, who were the most distinguished for their probity and talents; and brought against them charges of so frivolous a nature, and so entirely unsupported by evidence, that the Cortes, after examining them, came at once to the unanimous conclusion, that there was no ground of accusation against these members. In consequence of this scandalous scene, several petitions were presented, praying that the Cortes would change the members of the Regency; and three new regents were appointed. Yanez and Iturbidé were retained; the first, on account of his conduct on the 3d of April, when he denounced the usurpation of the president; and the latter, because it was necessary to conciliate the army.

A more serious cause of dispute soon arose. The Cortes very wisely directed their attention to the organisation of the militia, and were desirous of reducing the standing army to twenty thousand men. Iturbidé, on the contrary, used every effort to augment the army. Some of his arguments on that subject are truly singular. They are contained in a message to the Cortes.

The Cortes persisted in their resolution; the army was reduced to twenty thousand men, and an auxiliary force of thirty thousand militia were called into the field. This decree exasperated Iturbidé, and it was resolved by his friends to carry their plans at once into effect. They were aware, from what had occurred on the 3d of April, and from the subsequent change that had taken place in the Regency, that the tide of public opinion was turned against them, and that, if they waited until the army was new modelled, it would be too late for them to act with any prospect of success. On this occasion, none of the commissioned officers were employed. The sergeants of three regiments then in garrison in the capital, which were known to be attached to the commander-in-chief, were intrusted with this commission. On the night of the 18th of May,* they assembled the soldiers, harangued

* Captain Hall states, that on this day, Iturbidé presented to the congress two Madrid Gazettes of the 13th and 14th of February, by which it appeared, that the cortes of Spain had declared the treaty of Cordova illegal, null, and void, as respected the Spanish government, and its subjects. On this, the congress, together with the inhabitants of Mexico, *and the troops*, immediately decided, that the Mexican nation was, by this declaration, freed from the obligations of the treaty so far as Spain was concerned, and that therefore the congress were at liberty to name an emperor. Accordingly they thought fit, in accordance with the voice of the people, to elect Don Augustin de Iturbidé. The Quarterly Re-

them, and distributed money among them. They marched out of their quarters, and drew up in front of Iturbidé's house, where they were joined by a mob of *Leperos*. At ten o'clock, commenced the shouts of "Long live Iturbidé, Augustin First, Emperor of Mexico!" and the firing and vivas were continued until morning. Under a pretext of a regard for the personal safety of some of the most distinguished members of the Cortes, who were known to be opposed to the ambitious views of Iturbidé, a private intimation was conveyed to them that their lives would not be safe if they appeared in public the next day; that the troops were much exasperated against them; and that, in their present excitement, it would be difficult, if not impossible, for the officers to prevent them from committing acts of violence. Some of these gentlemen took this advice, and about forty members were absent when Iturbidé was proclaimed emperor. The ensuing morning, the Cortes assembled, amidst the shouts, insults, and threats of a disorderly soldiery, and of a mob, led on by the most worthless, abandoned, and unprincipled men in the community. When silence was obtained, a member rose, and, after setting forth the occurrences of the night as an act of the people, he proposed, that the assembly should forthwith proceed to the

viewer states, that, of the ninety-four members then in the house, seventy-seven voted for the general's elevation to the throne; fifteen declared that the provinces ought first to be consulted, and voted against it; and two withdrew without voting. "How far the decision of the congress may have been dictated by terror, we have no sufficient means of judging." The previous commotion, the crowds of citizens exclaiming *against the congress*, "Long live the Emperor Augustin the First!" the fact that the troops *assisted* at the deliberation of the Cortes, and that about forty members were deterred from attending, may enable the reader to come to at least a probable conclusion.

election of the emperor. The members, although prepared for this proposal, remained for some time silent. At length, one of them, in order to gain time, expressed an opinion, that the provinces ought to be consulted before they proceeded to an election; that they had been sent there, not to elect an emperor, but to frame a constitution. At this sentiment, the troops and the populace that filled the galleries became furious. They brandished their swords and knives, and shouted out, that they would cut the throats of the deputies if Iturbidé were not elected and proclaimed before one o'clock that day. The members did not dare any longer to resist this infuriated mob. Iturbidé was sent for; and the Cortes gave a reluctant consent to the choice of the soldiers, who, two days after, published a manifesto, boasting of the part they had taken in the elevation of the emperor, and attributing the design and execution of that event entirely to themselves. Most of the provinces submitted to this usurpation without any open complaint, and, after a short delay, took the oath of allegiance to the new emperor.*

The new emperor and the congress, as might be expected, did not long agree. The limits of the imperial prerogative, and the authority of the legislative body, had yet to be defined, and, in order to be defined, to undergo discussion. Iturbidé demanded the right of appointing his own privy council and the judges of the supreme court, and to be vested with the power of a veto upon all laws, not excepting the articles of the constitution which the Cortes were about to frame. The Cortes agreed that he should appoint his own council, but wished to have the nomination of the secretary to the council; this point, however, they afterwards gave up. But they refused

* Historical Sketch, pp. 268—273.

to confer upon the emperor the power of nominating the judges, and wished to leave the question of the *veto* to be determined by the constitution. They proposed to grant his imperial majesty the right of making objections and proposing alterations to the laws, with the advice and consent of the council, and within fifteen days after they were sent to him, with the exception of the articles of the constitution, and all laws on the subject of imports. At first, Iturbidé agreed to these proposals, but soon afterwards he renewed his original demands. Notwithstanding, however, the disgraceful scenes which daily took place in the hall of congress, and the disorderly conduct of the soldiery in the galleries, the Cortes continued firm in their opposition to what they regarded as the despotic views of the emperor. At length, a project submitted to them by his majesty's order, which aimed at the establishment of extraordinary military tribunals, on the plea of the inefficiency of the ordinary tribunals, was rejected unanimously and indignantly. This decisive step soon led to an open rupture. On the night of the 26th of August, fourteen of the most distinguished members of congress were arrested on a charge of treason. On the 29th, the congress addressed a message to the minister, demanding a fulfilment of the CLXXII[d] article of the constitution, which provided that no person should be kept under arrest more than forty-eight hours without being brought up before the competent tribunal. The answer returned was, that the article spoke only of one person, and could not apply to many persons accused of the same crime, whose cases could not be examined into in so short a time. An address was then voted to his majesty, praying that the members might be delivered up to be tried by the tribunal appointed by the Cortes. His

majesty's answer was, that the deputies under arrest could not be delivered to the tribunal appointed by congress, until it was ascertained whether the members who composed that tribunal were or were not themselves implicated in the conspiracy. This message was warmly discussed, and "somewhat abused" by the members of congress; but there was some plausibility in it; and it was at length resolved, after meeting in secret session day after day till the 12th of September, to say no more of the arrest of their colleagues for the present, who remained in the meantime in close confinement.

While the time and attention of the congress were occupied with these altercations, public business was of course entirely neglected. Neither had provision been made for the prompt administration of justice, nor had any system of finance as yet been organised to supply the exigencies of the treasury. The excuse given for this delay was, that the government refused an account of the expenditure. It must be admitted, however, that a fair pretence was thus afforded for the strong exercise of imperial prerogative which put an end to an assembly so impracticable. At length, we are told, his imperial majesty assembled at the palace a junta, composed of the members of congress who were favourable to his views, of the ministers, the council of state, and general officers. To these he stated, that the country would be ruined, if the number of the members of congress were not diminished; that the majority aspired to establish a democracy under the name of a monarchy; that they had not yet given a constitution to the empire, but had adopted that of Spain, which was not suited to the circumstances of the country. It was agreed, in consequence of this representation, to propose to congress, that

their number should be diminished, and that his majesty should have a *veto* on all laws and the nomination of the judges. Congress, by a very large majority, refused to assent to these demands; and the next day (October 30), a general officer was sent to dissolve the assembly, with orders to expel the members by force, if they continued above ten minutes longer in session. The ensuing day, a proclamation announced the dissolution of the congress, charging them with a neglect of duty, in not having given the nation a constitution, provided for the administration of justice, or paid the arrears due to the army; and appointing a junta, to be nominated by the emperor, to meet on the 2d of November. This junta, consisting of forty-five members, met accordingly, and the session was opened by his majesty in person. The minister of the treasury presented an *exposé* of the state of the public revenue, from which it appeared, that the expenditure was not less than thirteen millions of dollars, while the receipts were supposed to be eight millions. A few days after, the junta decreed a forced loan of 2,500,000 dollars; and, as the exigencies of the state were urgent, they took for its immediate use a large sum detained at Perote, belonging to Spaniards who had left, or were about to leave the empire.

Iturbidé did not long enjoy his power in tranquillity. An insurrection broke out in the northern provinces, in the month of October, which might have proved formidable under an able leader, but was soon put down. Garza, who began the revolt at Soto la Marina, made scarcely a show of resistance when met by the imperial forces. Soon after this, the garrison of the castle of San Juan Ullua made an unsuccessful attempt to destroy the works on the flanks of the city

of Vera Cruz. On receiving intelligence of this act of hostility, the junta issued a decree prohibiting all intercourse with the castle and all commerce with Spain. After some correspondence with the governor of the castle, Iturbidé, thinking that, in a personal interview, he might induce him to accept terms mutually advantageous, left the capital on the 10th of November, and in a few days reached Xalapa. On his passage through Puebla,* he was magnificently entertained, and received with every demonstration of loyalty. The governor of San Juan Ullua could not, however, be persuaded either to leave the castle, or to come to terms. The emperor went no further than Xalapa, but, while he was here, an occurrence took place which led to important results.

" Santana, the governor of Vera Cruz, an active, enterprising officer, who commanded the forces that stormed that city when it was taken from the royalists, and who had long enjoyed an independent command, could not brook the control of a superior. Disputes soon arose between him and Echavarri, the commander-in-chief of the southern division ; and Santana was summoned before the emperor at Xalapa, to answer the charges preferred against him by Echavarri. Sure of the protection of his imperial master, to whom he had always shewn the most devoted attachment, he readily obeyed the summons ; but, to

* " The bishop of Puebla is supposed to have been a principal agent in bringing about the revolution, and in exalting Iturbidé to the throne; he is represented by all who know him, to be a man of talents, well educated, and of mild and amiable manners. He now possesses unbounded influence, and may be regarded as the head of the church in Mexico. The archbishop of Mexico, whom all parties unite in praising for his knowledge and virtue, would not be concerned in the elevation of Iturbidé. He refused to crown him, and retired from the court to his country seat."—*Hist. Sketch*, p. 281.

his great surprise, Iturbidé treated him harshly, and dismissed him from the command of Vera Cruz. Enraged by this unexpected treatment, Santana suddenly left Xalapa, and riding day and night, arrived at Vera Cruz before the news of his disgrace had reached there. He instantly assembled his own regiment, and pointing out to them the odious character of the government imposed upon them by Iturbidé, he exhorted them to take up arms in defence of the liberties of their country. This exhortation was in unison with the wishes of all the officers, both of the garrison of Vera Cruz and of the neighbouring towns. The character of Santana, and his supposed attachment to the emperor, had alone prevented them from openly declaring in favour of a liberal system of government.

"The standard of the republic was unfurled at Vera Cruz; and Santana addressed a letter to Iturbidé, in which he reminds him of the obligations he owed to him, of the part he had taken in his elevation to the throne, and of the affection he had always manifested for him,—but declaring, that his duty to his country now required him to set aside every other consideration, and to oppose the man who had reduced the nation to the utmost misery. He reproaches him with having broken his oath, and dissolved the congress by violence; and tells him, that the people are convinced, that under his government, the sacred rights of property will never be respected. He then states his intention to re-assemble the congress, and to establish a republican government; sets forth the means he possesses of carrying his plan into effect; and advises Iturbidé to renounce the crown, and to rely upon the generosity of the congress, which will take care to reward his services.

" The emperor did not relish this advice, and ordered Echavarri, who was at Xalapa, to advance with the division under his command against the insurgents, as he called the troops of Santana. The latter advanced to Puente del Rey, which he fortified; and several smart actions were fought between the imperialists and the republicans. In this state of things, Guadalupe Victoria left his hiding place in the mountains, and joined Santana. At first, he was appointed second in command; but Santana soon found the interests of the party required, that an officer who had been an undeviating republican, and who enjoyed the entire confidence of the troops and of the people, should be raised to the supreme command. Guadalupe Victoria was accordingly declared commander-in-chief: the people flocked to his standard, and the insurrection spread throughout the whole province.

" On the 1st of February, 1823, an arrangement was made by Echavarri and the officers commanding the imperialists, with Guadalupe Victoria and Santana; and the two armies, united,* sent commissions to Iturbidé, offering terms, but insisting upon a congress being immediately assembled to frame a liberal and republican constitution. Iturbidé, in his turn, sent commissions to Echavarri and his officers, to endeavour to divert them from their purpose; and immediately marched with a small body of troops, and took

* Santana, disappointed probably at not being elected by the congress as one of the executive government, made an attempt, in the month of March, to seize the supreme power. He sailed from Vera Cruz with 600 men, and landed at Tampico, whence he advanced rapidly through the country, and took up his head quarters at San Luis Potosi. Here he proclaimed himself Protector of the Federal Republic. He failed, however, to inspire the people with confidence in his intentions, and was compelled to surrender to the forces sent against him by the government of Mexico.

post at Istapaluca, a town four leagues from the capital, on the road to Puebla. The defection of the army of Echavarri, was the signal of revolt in all the other provinces. Oaxaca, Guadalaxara, Guanaxuato, San Luis Potosi, declared in favour of a republican government; and in the capitals of those provinces, in Queretaro, and in Valladolid, the inhabitants rose and imprisoned the imperial commanders. The generals Guerrero and Bravo, men who had been distinguished in the wars of the revolution, secretly departed from Mexico, and appeared in arms in the west.

"In reply to Iturbidé's proposals, the republican generals demanded the immediate convocation of the Cortes, and a large sum of money to pay the troops. With the latter request Iturbidé would have found it difficult to comply, even if he had had the inclination so to do. To relieve his exigencies, he issued, on the 1st of January, 1823, four millions of paper money, which was by law made a legal tender for one-third the amount of any debt or purchase. It was received at the custom-house in payment of duties in the same proportion. As may readily be supposed, this paper currency was immediately depreciated, and its issue occasioned great discontent among the people, which was not a little augmented by the emperor's calling upon the Padres Provinciales for a contribution in church plate.

"The province and city of Puebla were soon after added to the number of Iturbidé's enemies. The Marquess de Vivanco assumed the government of that place, and soon organised a strong force. The army of Xalapa now pushed forward to Puebla, where they were joined by Negrete, and several officers of dis-

tinction, and the advanced guard of the republicans was stationed at San Martin de Tesmelucos.

" The emperor returned to the capital, and, on the 8th of March, he called together all the members of the old congress who were in the city, and tendered his abdication. A few only of them could be brought together, and, not being a quorum, they refused to act.

" The partisans of Iturbidé continued to desert him; and, at length, finding himself entirely abandoned, and his situation hopeless, he, on the 19th of March, addressed a letter to the congress, containing his abdication, and retired to Tulancingo. In this letter, he says, ' that he accepted the crown with the greatest reluctance, and only to serve his country; but from the moment he perceived that his retaining possession of it might serve, if not as a cause, at least as a pretext for civil war, he determined to give it up; that he did not abdicate before, because there was no national representation, generally recognised as such, to receive it; that, as his presence in the country might serve as a pretext for dissensions, he will retire to some foreign land, and asks only a fortnight to prepare for his departure; and finally solicits congress to pay his debts.'

" This letter was referred to a committee of congress; and in their report, (which is a curious document,) they refuse to admit the renunciation of his power, or his abdication of the crown, as that would suppose a right to have existed to the thing renounced. They recommend that he should be permitted to depart the kingdom, and be allowed a yearly income of twenty-five thousand dollars for the maintenance of his family and suite.

"Iturbidé was escorted to Antigua, near Vera Cruz, by General Bravo; and on the 11th of May, 1823, he embarked on board an English ship, chartered to convey him to Leghorn. His family and suite consisted of twenty-five persons.

"On the 27th of March, the republican army entered the capital. The old congress was immediately convoked; a provisional government established; and an executive, composed of three members, appointed. Generals Bravo, Victoria, and Negrete, were the first chosen: the two first are natives, the last a European of distinguished talents."

Immediately after Iturbidé was sent out of the country, measures were taken to call a new congress, and deputies were elected throughout the empire. In these elections, the partisans of Iturbidé and the Bourbonists were alike excluded. The new congress assembled in the capital, and in a short time framed the project of a constitution, which has since been adopted with very little alteration.* By this constitution, the Mexican nation (composed of the provinces comprehended within the territory of the ancient viceroyalty of New Spain, the captaincy-general of Yucatan, and the internal provinces,) adopts for its government the form of "a representative popular federal republic." The states of the federation are declared to be:

* The *projet*, drawn up by the committee appointed for the purpose, was presented to the Constituent Congress at their session of Nov. 20, 1823. The signatures of the committee affixed to it are, Miguel Ramos de Arizpe, Manuel Arguelles, Rafael Mangins, Tomao Vargas, Jose de Jesus Huerta.

1. Chiapas.
2. Guanaxuato.
3. Interior western provinces; comprising Sonora, Sinalsa, and both Californias.
4. Interior northern provinces; comprising Chihahua, Durango, and New Mexico.
5. Interior eastern provinces; comprising Cohahuila, New Leon, Texas, and New Santander (St. Andero).
6. Mexico.
7. Mechoacan.
8. Oaxaca.
9. Puebla de los Angeles, with Tlascala.
10. Queretaro.
11. San Luis Potosi.
12. Tabasco.
13. Vera Cruz.
14. Xalisco.
15. Yucatan.
16. Zacatecas.

These states are declared to be free, sovereign, and independent in what relates exclusively to their internal administration. But the power is reserved to congress, of augmenting their number, or modifying the divisions, as may, upon better information, seem more conformable to the general will and the happiness of the people. Art. III. declares that the religion of the Mexican nation is, and shall be perpetually, the Catholic-Apostolic-Roman: "the nation protects it by just and wise laws, and prohibits the exercise of any other." Art. X. declares that the legislative power of the Federation shall be lodged in a chamber of deputies and a senate, constituting the general congress of the Federation. Art. XVI. provides, that the executive power shall, for a limited time, be lodged in an individual, with the title of *President of the Mexican Federation*, who shall be a native born citizen, of the full age of thirty-five years. A Vice-President is also provided. All decrees and orders of the executive must be signed by the secretary of the department to which the business belongs, in order to be valid. The President, Vice-President, or others in whom the executive power is lodged, may, during their term of office and for one year thereafter, be

impeached and tried for conduct contrary to the constitution and laws. The judicial power is lodged in the hands of a supreme court of justice, and in such tribunals and courts as shall be established in each state.*

This constitution was not adopted without some opposition. The partisans of Iturbidé, for some time after his departure, continued to disturb the public tranquillity; but, as they were well known to the government, and closely watched, their designs were constantly defeated. Another cause of dissatisfaction existed in the desire of some of the members of government to form a *central* government at Mexico. This was resisted by several of the provinces; and at one time, Guadalaxara and other districts were in a state of revolt, insisting upon the establishment of the federal form of government. Their wishes were acceded to; the federal constitution was sworn to in the capital on the 2d of February, 1824, amid the rejoicings of the people; and the provinces proceeded to organise their respective state governments with the greatest harmony.

Early in January 1824, however, the province of Puebla was thrown into confusion, by a refusal on the part of General Echavarri to obey the orders of the

* The former captain-generalship of Guatimala declared its independence at the same time with Mexico, but refused to unite with that government. Since the fall of Iturbidé, these provinces, with the exception of Chiapa, have formed themselves into a federal government, with the style and title of the *Confederated States of the Centre of America*. They have adopted a constitution similar to that of Mexico, and the government has been recognised by the sister republic. Chiapa and Soconusco, being contiguous both to the Mexican and the Central States, were claimed by both. The option being wisely given to the people of the two provinces, one (Chiapa) adhered to Mexico, and the other (Soconusco) to Guatimala.

executive; with what view, or from what cause, does not appear. General Guerrero was immediately despatched with a small force to quell the insurrection, which he effected without bloodshed; and Echavarri, deserted by his troops, was seized and conveyed a prisoner to Mexico. Another insurrection, which broke out shortly after at Cuernavaca, headed by one Hernandez, was quelled in like manner by General Guerrero. A more formidable insurrection took place in the capital about the same time, which had for its object to compel the congress to dismiss all Europeans from office. It was set on foot by the Creole inhabitants; and the garrison of the capital, with their commander Lobato, headed the opposition. The congress, with great firmness, refused to comply with this demand, and summoned Lobato to appear before them. In the meantime, great exertions were made by the Government and by the friends of order, to collect a body of troops sufficient to awe the factious, and to win over a part of the garrison. After a negotiation of two days, Lobato surrendered himself at discretion to the Government, and was pardoned. Some of the more obstinate, led on by Lieut.-Col. Staboli, refused to submit, but were deserted by their followers, and delivered up to the Government. Staboli, an Italian, was tried by a court-martial, and sentenced to be shot; but, at the solicitation of the executive, congress commuted his punishment to perpetual banishment, and he, together with twenty-three other officers, was sent out of the country.

After this insurrection was suppressed by the firmness and prudence of congress, it was thought advisable to remove all further ground of complaint on that score. Arillaja, the minister of finance, a European, was succeeded by Medina, a native American,

and other changes were made; the Government decreeing, that the Europeans so dismissed from office, should receive one-third of their former salary as a pension for life.

The tranquillity of the country was again placed in jeopardy in the month of July 1824, by an event over which there still hangs a considerable degree of mystery. Iturbidé, the ex-emperor, had been banished to Italy. He subsequently came to England, whence, on the 11th of May, 1824, he embarked for Mexico, taking with him his wife, his two sons, and servants. In a statement which he put forth, he professes to have been urgently solicited to do so by his countrymen, who considered his presence there as necessary to the establishment of unanimity, and the stability of the state. A decree of the Congress, dated April 28 preceding, had declared him a traitor, and placed him out of the protection of the law, if he should again set his foot on the territory of the Confederacy. Iturbidé, aware of this, endeavoured to introduce himself into the country in disguise, designing, probably, to lie hid till his partisans should have arranged matters for his appearance. On the 14th of July, an English vessel appeared off the port of Soto la Marina, professing to have on board the foreigner, Charles de Beneski, and a companion of his, come to Mexico for the purpose of treating with the Government on a plan of colonisation, having to that effect power from three Irish capitalists, merchants in London. On the following day, the commanding officer, General de la Garza, was waited upon by Beneski, who, in answer to the interrogatories put to him respecting Iturbidé, assured him, that, at the time of his sailing, Iturbidé was living privately with his family. He then obtained permis-

sion to bring on shore his companion. On the next day but one, information was given, that Beneski was walking on shore with another person, who was disguised; on which De la Garza immediately despatched a party of troops to apprehend them. They were taken at Paraje de los Arroyos, about six leagues from Soto la Marina, when the disguised companion proved to be no other than the ex-emperor. He was immediately sent to Padilla, to be placed at the disposal of the State Congress, by whom it was determined to give immediate effect to the sovereign decree of the 28th of April, denouncing Iturbidé as a traitor in case of his landing; and he was accordingly shot on the evening of the 19th. Thus, fortunately for the peace of the country, terminated this rash and ill-digested attempt to recover a usurped throne. In the capital, the news was received with no unseemly exultation. Addresses were sent up from the provinces, congratulating the Government on the fate of Iturbidé. But the Sovereign Congress, actuated by feelings which do them the greatest honour, passed a resolution to grant his widow an annual pension of 3000 dollars.

In a proclamation said to have been issued by Iturbidé on his landing, he professes to have returned to Mexico, not as emperor, but as a soldier and a Mexican, with the sole object of reconciling differences, and of defeating the intrigues which threatened to restore the country to Spanish domination; and he pretends that he had with difficulty eluded the toils which the Holy Alliance were preparing, to prevent him from achieving this patriotic purpose. The prevailing belief is, that he was encouraged by the agents of that Holy Alliance, to attempt the overthrow of the Federal

Government.* Capt. Basil Hall, who appears to have formed a very high opinion of Iturbidé, expresses his conviction, that his decision, if not a wise one, was both patriotic and disinterested. It might be so: his personal aggrandisement might not be his main object, in attempting the restoration of the imperial form of government. But that his designs were treasonable, there can be no question; and the safety of the Government required, that the last hopes of his party should be extinguished by his death. Those who justify the execution of Murat, the ex-king of Naples, cannot with any consistency blame the Mexican Government for inflicting the same punishment on Iturbidé.

On the 13th of July, an important decree was issued by the supreme executive power, (Guadalupe Victoria president,) abolishing for ever in the Mexican territory the trade and traffic in slaves, under any flag, and declaring that the slaves introduced contrary to the tenor of this decree, should be free, *ipso facto*, on their landing. Every ship, national or foreign, in which slaves are transported or introduced into the Mexican territory, is to be irrecoverably confiscated, and the proprietor, purchaser, captain, master, and pilot, are to be liable to ten years' imprisonment.

The most serious difficulty which the new government laboured under, arose out of the exhausted state of the public finances. In August 1824, a loan of twenty millions of dollars was contracted for, with the house of Barclay, Herring, Richardson, and Co., of London; and a further loan was subsequently negotiated of sixteen millions. From the decree and en-

* Letters from Italy and Paris represented his departure as an intrigue of the French government.

gagement issued by the Mexican Government on this occasion, it appears that the Supreme Executive Power at that time consisted of "the excellent Señores Don Nicolas Bravo, Don Vincente Guerrero, and Don Miguel Dominguez." Subsequent accounts, however, announce, that General Victoria had been re-instated as President of the Mexican States, and General Bravo chosen Vice-President.

We have only to notice one other event, not inferior in interest and importance to any which has transpired since the establishment of the Mexican independence. On the 1st of January, 1825, Mr. Canning is stated to have communicated to all the foreign ministers at the English court, that the cabinet of his Britannic Majesty had come to the resolution of acknowledging the independence of the Republics of Mexico and Colombia,* and that commissioners would be sent to those states, charged with full powers to conclude treaties of commerce between them and this country, founded on that recognition. It is understood, that Mr. Ward, the British commissioner for Mexico, accompanied by Mr. Ball, formerly attached to the embassy in Spain, has since embarked for America. This important act of the British Government will not be more conducive to the commercial prosperity of our own country, than to the stability of the Mexican Republic. The United States of North America had already received ministers plenipotentiary from Mexico, Guatimala, Colombia, and Buenos Ayres; and the President's message of the 7th December, announces to Congress, that their commercial relations with all

* The recognition of the independence of Buenos Ayres is delayed till further information has been received. From Chili, no explicit report had been returned as yet by the British commissioner.

those states were mutually beneficial and increasing. The preceding history will shew how little Mexico has to fear from any force that Spain could send out to attempt the reconquest of the country; and whatever intestine dissensions may arise, whatever modifications the form of government or the federal union may undergo, the independence of the nation may now be considered as fairly achieved and honourably ratified.

We now proceed to give a sketch of the physical geography of this important country.

PHYSICAL GEOGRAPHY.

THE face of the country may be conceived of by considering the lofty ranges of the Andes, which traverse the whole of South America, as concentrated at the Isthmus of Darien, and passing between the two oceans at a low elevation, which is gradually increased till they enter the Mexican territory, where they expand into a large district of table-land, varying from 6000 to 8500 feet above the level of the sea. Although this table-land may be considered as a vast plain, yet, there rise from it groupes of volcanic mountains, the summits of which, from 14,000 to 17,000 feet in height, are covered with perpetual snow. This plain, or table-land, as it extends towards the north, gradually expands in breadth, but preserves its elevation as far as the town of Durango, 140 leagues from Mexico. It then insensibly declines, till, at about 3000 miles from its southern boundary, its level is only a few hundred feet above the sea. This slope, contrary to the direction of the rivers, is traversed by some ranges of lofty mountains, which may be traced to the extremities of North America.

In the Southern Peninsula, the Cordillera of the Andes exhibits, at immense heights, plains completely level.* But none of the plains of New Granada, Quito, Peru, exceed forty square leagues. Of difficult access, and separated by deep valleys, they are described by Humboldt as forming islets in the aërial ocean. The Cordillera itself is every where cleft and interrupted by crevices, or open veins. In Mexico, it is the ridge itself of the mountains, which constitutes the plateau, or table-land, consisting of a series of extensive and connected plains, which run from the eighteenth to the fortieth parallel of north latitude. In New Granada and Peru, the deep valleys which traverse the country, prevent the inhabitants from travelling except on foot, on horseback, or on the shoulders of Indians. But in New Spain, carriages roll on to Santa Fe, in New Mexico, for a length of more than five hundred leagues. On the whole of this road, there were few difficulties for art to surmount. In travelling eastward from the capital, you advance sixty nautical leagues on the road to Vera Cruz, before you arrive at a valley 3280 feet above the sea level. In the Acapulco road, descending from Mexico towards the Pacific, the traveller arrives at the same temperate regions in less than seventeen leagues. The eastern declivity of the Cordillera is a continual and rapid descent to the coast; but the road to the western coast, for a distance of seventy-two leagues, alternately ascends and descends, passing through four remarkable longitudinal valleys, and the

* Such as the plain of Santa Fe de Bogota, 8400 feet above the level of the sea; that of Atahualpa in Peru, 9000 feet in elevation; and the great plains of Antisana, 13,451 feet higher than the ocean.

traveller passes repeatedly from a cold climate to regions excessively hot. Yet, this road may be made fit for carriages; whereas the difficulties of the descent in the latter part of the road to Vera Cruz, (like the road from Santo Paulo to Santos,) have hitherto rendered it impossible to transport merchandise from the interior, except by mules.

In that part of the Mexican territory situated in the torrid zone, a space of 23,000 square leagues enjoys a cold, rather than a temperate climate. This tract is traversed by the Cordillera of Mexico, a prolongation of the Peruvian Andes. In the isthmus, the chain of the Andes sometimes approaches the Pacific Ocean, sometimes occupies the centre of the country, and at other times approaches the Gulf of Mexico. In Guatimala, the crest of these mountains, jagged with volcanic cones, stretches along the western coast from the lake of Nicaragua as far as the bay of Tehuantepec; but in the province of Oaxaca, between the sources of the rivers Chimalapa and Guasacualco, it occupies the centre of the Mexican isthmus. Between the parallels of 18° 30′ N. lat., and 21°, in the intendencies of La Puebla and Mexico, from Misteca to the mines of Zamapan, the Cordillera stretches from south to north, and approaches the eastern coast. It is in this part of the table-land, between the capital and the towns of Xalapa and Cordova, that a groupe of volcanic mountains appear, which rival in elevation the highest peaks of the new continent. *Popoca-tepetl* (smoking mountain), called by the Spaniards "the great volcano," is nearly 18,000 feet in height. *Iztac-cihuatl* (the white woman), the *Sierra Nevada* of the Spaniards, is nearly 16,000 feet; *Citlal-tepetl* (star mountain), so called from its appearing at a distance like a star

when it emits fire, otherwise called the Peak of Orizaba, is 17,500 feet; and *Nauhcampa-tepetl* (square mountain), or Coffer of Perote, is 13,400 feet.* More to the north of the parallel of 19°, near the celebrated mines of Zimapan and the Doctor, in the intendency of Mexico, the Cordillera takes the name of *Sierra Madre;* in Mexican, *Tepe Suene.* Leaving the eastern part of the kingdom, it then runs to the north-west, towards the cities of San Miguel and Guanaxuato. To the north of the latter town, considered as the Potosi of Mexico, the Sierra Madre expands to an extraordinary breadth, and shortly afterwards divides into three branches. The most eastern of these proceeds towards Charcas and the Real de Catorce, losing itself in the new kingdom of Leon. The western occupies a part of the intendency of Guadalaxara, and rapidly declining from Bolaños, stretches by Culiacan and Arispe, into the intendency of Sonora, as far as the banks of the *Rio Gila:* under the thirtieth parallel of latitude it regains a considerable elevation in Tarahumara, near the Gulf of California, where it forms the mountains of *Primeria alta*, celebrated for their extensive gold-washings. The centre branch of the Sierra Madre occupies the whole extent of the intendency of Zacatecas; it may then be traced through Durango and Panal, in New Biscay, to the *Sierra de los Nombres*, westward of the Rio Grande del Norte; and thence traverses New Mexico to join the mountains of *Las Grullas* (crane mountains), and the *Sierra Verde*, in lat. 40° N. It is this crest of the central branch of the Sierra Madre, or Mexican Andes,

* In Humboldt's Political Essay, the respective heights are stated to be 2771, 2455, 2717, and 2089 toises. Malte-Brun, following the same traveller's "Account of the Equinoctial Regions," states them at 2764, 2461, 2722, and 2097 toises.

which divides the head waters of the streams flowing into the two oceans. The sources of the Rio Gila are said to approach those of the Rio Grande del Norte. A continuation of this branch is found extending as far as lat. 55° N.

The prevailing geological feature of this mountain chain is porphyritic rock. Granite appears at the surface in the little chain bordering on the Pacific; and the beautiful port of Acapulco is excavated by the hand of nature in granitic rocks. The same rock forms the mountains of Misteca and Zacateca, in the intendency of Oaxaca. The central plateau of Anahuac, or table-land, appears like an enormous dike of porphyritic rocks, distinguished from those of Europe by the constant presence of hornblende and the absence of quartz. Basalt, amygdaloid, trap, gypsum, and primitive limestone predominate. They contain immense deposites of gold and silver. Copper is found in the intendencies of Valladolid and Guanaxuato, and in New Mexico. Tin is obtained by washing from the alluvial soil, in Guanaxuato and Zacatecas; and iron abounds in Valladolid, Zacatecas, Guadalaxara, and the internal provinces. Lead is found in the calcareous formations in the north-eastern parts, especially in the district of Zimapan, near Linares, in New Leon, and near St. Nicholas de Cruz in New Santander. Zinc, antimony, arsenic, and mercury are also found in different parts. Coal has hitherto been discovered only in New Mexico: there is already a coal-mine near the sources of the Rio Sabina. In general, coal and rock-salt abound to the west of the Sierra Verde, near the lake of Timpanogos, in Upper Louisiana, and in those vast northern regions situated between the stony mountains of Mackenzie and Hudson's Bay. The most abundant salt-mine in Mexico

is the lake of Peñon Blanco in the intendency of San Luis Potosi.

Almost all the summits of the American cordilleras contain craters. That of the Popocatepetl is said to be half a league in circumference: it is at present inaccessible. The Peak of Orizava is also a volcano, from which in 1545 an eruption took place, which continued for twenty years. The conical summit is covered with eternal snow. Iztac-cihuatl is supposed to be an extinguished volcano, although no Indian tradition goes so far back as the time of an eruption. The inhabitants of Mexico are less disturbed by volcanic explosions and earthquakes than the inhabitants of Guatimala and Quito. There were only five burning volcanoes in all New Spain when Humboldt visited the country; viz. Orizava, Popocatepetl, and the mountains of Tustla, Jorullo, and Colima. Earthquakes are by no means rare on the coast of the Pacific, and in the neighbourhood of the capital, but they have never been known to produce such desolating effects as have been witnessed in the cities of Lima, Riobamba, Guatimala,* and Cumana. Nevertheless, on the 14th of September, 1759, the plains of Jorullo, on the shores of the Pacific, formed the scene of one of the most tremendous catastrophes that the surface of the globe has ever exhibited. In one single night, there issued from the earth a volcano 1494 feet in elevation, surrounded by more than 2000 apertures, which continue to emit smoke to the present day. MM. Humboldt and Bonpland descended into the burning crater of the great volcano to a perpendicular

* Guatimala was for a long time kept in a state of constant alarm by the vicinity of two mountains, one of which vomited fire, and the other water, till at length the city was swallowed up by a tremendous explosion.

depth of 258 feet, leaping over crevices which exhaled sulphuretted hydrogen, till they almost reached the bottom of the crater, where the air was, in an extraordinary degree, surcharged with carbonic acid. The granitic mountains of Oaxaca do not contain any known volcano, but they continue south as far as Nicaragua. Near that city is the volcano of Momantobo, and the Omo-tepetl shoots up its burning peak from the bosom of the lake. The province of Costa Rica likewise contains volcanoes, and other volcanic mountains border the gulfs of the Pacific. On the whole, M. Humboldt concludes, that the country between the parallels of 18° and 22°, contains an active internal fire, which pierces, from time to time, through the crust of the globe, even at considerable distances from the sea-shore.

As the immense plains which form the table-land of Mexico are elevated above the clouds during the greater part of the year, the soil becomes parched and intersected with numerous deep fissures, by which the moisture of the surface is exhausted; and being nearly destitute of rivers, it presents a bare and arid aspect, the general resemblance of which to the plains of the two Castiles, induced the followers of Cortes to give it the name of New Spain. Many extensive districts are utterly destitute of water; and there occur in some parts, vast plains covered with a saline efflorescence, bearing a resemblance to many places in Thibet, and to the saline steppes of central Asia. In the spots which are somewhat below the average level, and which may, in regard to their comparative elevation, be called valleys, the soil is highly fertile: they are described as resembling lakes dried up, which is probably their real character.

The want of water and of navigable rivers is

a serious disadvantage. The great *Rio Bravo del Norte*, and the *Rio Colorado*, are the only rivers that merit attention, from the length of their course, and the great mass of water which they carry to the ocean; but, flowing as they do, in the most uncultivated part of the kingdom, it will be long before they possess any interest with regard to commerce. In all the equinoctial parts of Mexico, only small rivers are met with; but their estuaries are very broad. The narrow form of the continent prevents the union of a great body of water; while the rapid declivity of the Cordillera gives rise to torrents rather than rivers. Among the small number of rivers which are found in the southern part of the country, the only ones that may one day or other become interesting for the commerce of the interior, are, the *Rio Guasacualco*, and that of *Alvarado*, both of which are to the south-east of Vera Cruz, and are calculated to facilitate the communication with the kingdom of Guatimala; the *Rio de Montezuma*, which carries the waters of the lakes and valley of Tenochtitlan to the Rio de Panuco, and by which, forgetting the elevation of the ground, a navigation has been proposed between the capital and the eastern coast; the *Rio de Zacatula;* and, lastly, the great river of *Santiago*, or *Tololotlan*, formed by the union of the rivers of Lerma, and Las Laxas, which might convey the flour of Salamanca, of Zelaya, and, perhaps, also that of the whole intendency of Guadalaxara, to Port San Blas, on the shores of the Pacific Ocean.

The lakes with which Mexico abounds, and the greater part of which seem annually to diminish in size, are merely the remains of those immense basins that appear once to have existed on the lofty and extensive plains of the Cordillera. The principal are,

the great lake of Shapala, in Guadalaxara, which covers nearly one hundred and sixty square leagues of country; the lakes of the valley of Mexico, that occupy one-fourth of the surface of this valley; the lake of Pazcuaro, in the intendency of Valladolid, one of the most picturesque spots on the globe; and the lakes of Mextitlan and Parras, in New Biscay.

'The whole of the eastern coast of New Spain may be looked upon as an immense dike or wall, against which the trade-winds, and the perpetual movement of the waters from east to west, heave up the sand which the agitated ocean holds suspended. The revolving current, arriving from the Southern Atlantic Ocean, first rolls past Brazil and Guyana, and then coasts the Caraccas, from Cumana to Darien. It returns towards Cape Catoche in Yucatan, and after long whirling in eddies in the Gulf of Mexico, it issues by the Bahama Channel or Gulf of Florida, and directs its course towards the Bank of Newfoundland. The sand accumulated by the eddying whirl of the water from the Peninsula of Yucatan to the mouth of the Rio del Norte, insensibly contracts the basin of the Gulf of Mexico, by adding to the breadth of the continent. The rivers that descend from the Sierra Madre to empty themselves into the Sea of the Antilles, contribute not a little to fill up and elevate the bottom. The whole of the eastern coast of New Spain, from the 18° to the 26° of latitude, is obstructed by bars. Only vessels drawing little water can cross one of these bars without running the risk of grounding. Nevertheless, these obstacles, so formidable to commerce, facilitate, at the same time, the defence of the country against the ambitious projects of a European conqueror.

Another very serious inconvenience is common

both to the eastern and western coasts of the Isthmus. Violent storms render it almost impossible, during several months, to effect a landing, and thus prevent almost all navigation along these shores. The north-west winds, denominated *los nortes*, blow in the Gulf of Mexico from the autumnal, to the vernal equinox. In September and October they are generally mild: they are most violent in the month of March. On the east coast, the navigation is very dangerous in the months of July and August, dreadful tornadoes blowing at that time from the south-west. At this season, and even till September and October, the anchorage of San Blas, Acapulco, and all the ports of the kingdom of Guatimala, are exceedingly unsafe. During the fine part of the year, from October till May, the tranquillity of the ocean is again interrupted in these roadsteads by the furious winds from the north-east and north-west, known by the names of *Papagallo* and *Tehuantepec*.

The coasts of New Spain are almost the only parts of the kingdom that possess a climate sufficiently warm to bring to perfection the productions of the West Indies. The intendency of Vera Cruz, (with the exception of the plain which extends from Perote to the Peak of Orizava,) Yucatan, the coast of Oaxaca, the intendency of San Luis Potosi, the uncultivated district called *Bolson de Mapimi*, the coast of California, the western part of Sonora and of the intendencies formerly comprised in New Gallicia, and the southern borders of Valladolid, Mexico, and la Puebla, are tracts of low country, interrupted only by inconsiderable hills. The mean temperature of these plains is from 77° to 79° of Fahrenheit's thermometer; that is to say, from 17° to 19° greater than the mean temperature of Naples. These fertile but unhealthy

regions, denominated *Tierras Calientes* (hot countries), produce sugar, indigo, cotton, and bananas. The port of Acapulco and the valleys of Papagayo and Peregrino, may be classed among the hottest and most unhealthy portions of the globe. On the eastern coast, the great heats are at times tempered by strata of cold air brought by the winds from Hudson's Bay. These impetuous winds blow from October to March, and they frequently cool the air to such a degree, that, near the Havannah, the thermometer descends to 32° Fahrenheit, and at Vera Cruz, to 61°; a very remarkable depression for countries within the torrid zone. At other seasons, the yellow fever, here known by the name of the *vomito prieto* (black vomit), never fails to attack Europeans not seasoned to the climate, who venture to remain for any length of time within these regions.*

"On the declivity of the Cordillera, at the height of from 4000 to 5000 feet, there constantly reigns the genial temperature of spring, which does not vary more than eight or nine degrees. Intense heat and excessive cold are equally unknown. This region is called by the natives *Tierras Templadas*, or temperate countries, in which the mean heat of the whole year is from 68° to 70° Fahr. This is the delicious climate of Xalapa, Tasco, and Chilpansingo, three

* The ports of Vera Cruz and Acapulco, Mr. Bullock says, are deserted by foreigners during the rainy season, which lasts from April or May till October; "and indeed the natives, during this period, shut themselves up in their houses, or only leave them on the greatest emergencies. Strangers, particularly young men from Europe, cannot remain with safety even for a day. Even the muleteers have a dread of Vera Cruz; for to those accustomed to the table-land, it is almost as fatal as to strangers"—that is, during the rainy season.

towns celebrated for the extreme salubrity of their climate, and for the abundance of the fruit-trees that are cultivated in their environs. Unfortunately, this medium elevation of 4260 feet is almost the same as that at which the clouds float above the plains adjacent to the sea; and, in consequence of this circumstance, these temperate regions, although situated upon elevated ground, are often enveloped in dense fogs.

"The third zone, designated by the appellation of *Tierras Frias*, or cold countries, comprehends the plateaus that are higher than 7200 feet above the level of the ocean, and of which the medium temperature is 63° Fahr. and under. In the capital of Mexico, the centigrade thermometer has been seen some degrees below the freezing point; but this phenomenon is very rare. More commonly, the winters are as mild there as at Naples. In the coldest season, the medium heat of the day is from 55° to 70° Fahr. In summer, the thermometer in the shade does not rise above 76° Fahr. The most ordinary mean temperature that prevails over the whole of the great plateau of Mexico, is 63° Fahr., which is equal to the temperature of the air at Rome; and the olive-tree is cultivated with success. This same plateau, however, according to the classification of the natives, belongs to the *Tierras Frias*. Thus, with them, the expressions *cold* and *hot* have no absolute signification. But those plateaus that are higher than the valley of Mexico, (those, for example, whose actual height exceeds 8200 feet,) although situated under the Tropics, have a climate which, even to an inhabitant of the north, appears rude and disagreeable. Of this description are the plains of Toluca, and the heights of Guchi-

laque, where, during a great part of the day, the air never becomes hotter than from 43° to 46° Fahr. The olive here bears no fruit.

" All the regions denominated cold, enjoy a mean temperature of from 52° to 56° Fahr., equal to that of France and Lombardy. Still, vegetation there is much less vigorous, and the plants of Europe do not grow with the same rapidity as in their native soil. The winters, at an elevation of 8200 feet, are not extremely severe. It must, however, be admitted, that in summer the sun never heats the rarefied air of these plateaus sufficiently to accelerate the expansion of flowers, and to bring the fruit to perfect maturity. It is this unvarying equability of temperature, this absence of a fervent but ephemeral heat, which impresses a peculiar character on the climate of the high equinoctial regions. Accordingly, the cultivation of many vegetables is less successful on the ridge of the Mexican Cordilleras, than on the plains situated to the north of the Tropic; although it often happens that the mean temperature of these latter, is lower than that of the plateaus comprised between the 19° and the 22° of north latitude.

" In the equinoctial region of Mexico, and even as far as the 28° of north latitude, only two seasons are known; namely, that of the rains, which commences in the month of June or July, and ends in September or October; and the dry season, which continues eight months, namely, from October till the end of May. The formation of clouds, and the precipitation of the water dissolved by the air, generally begin on the eastern slope of the Cordillera. These phenomena, accompanied by loud electrical explosions, extend in succession from east to west,

in the direction of the trade-winds; so that the rain falls fifteen or twenty days later on the central plateau, than at Vera Cruz. Sometimes, in the months of December and January, rain, mixed with sleet and snow, is seen falling on the mountains, even at an actual elevation of more than 6562 feet. These rains, however, continue only a few days; and, cold as they are, they are looked upon as highly beneficial to the vegetation of wheat, and the growth of pastures. From the parallel of 24° to that of 30°, the rain falls less frequently, and continues a shorter time. Fortunately, the snow, of which there is a considerable quantity from the 26° of latitude, compensates for this scarcity of rain.

"In France, and in the greater part of Europe, the employment of the soil almost exclusively depends on geographical latitude; the configuration of the country, the proximity of the ocean, or other local circumstances, exerting only a feeble influence over the temperature. On the contrary, in the equinoctial regions of America, the climate, the nature of the productions, the aspect and general features of the country, are almost all of them modified by the elevation of the land above the level of the sea. In latitudes 19° and 22°, sugar, cotton, and especially cocoa and indigo, do not afford an abundant crop at a lower elevation than 2000 or 2600 feet. European wheat occupies a zone which, on the slope of the mountains, generally commences at the height of 4585 feet, and terminates at 9752 feet. The banana, that most useful plant, which constitutes the principal nourishment of all the inhabitants of the tropics, almost entirely ceases to bear fruit above the level of 5000 feet. The oak of Mexico grows only between 2500 and 10,000 feet of elevation. The pines descend

towards the shores of Vera Cruz, only as low as 6068 feet; but it must be added, that they do not rise higher towards the line of perpetual snow, than 13,123 feet.

" The provinces denominated *internas*, situated within the temperate zone, and especially those comprehended between the 30° and 38° of latitude, enjoy, with the rest of North America, a climate essentially different from that which prevails, under the same parallels, on the old continent: it is particularly distinguished by a striking inequality in the temperature of the different seasons. Winters of a German rigour succeed to summers that vie with those of Naples and Sicily. But this difference of temperature is much less marked in those parts of the new continent which approach the Pacific Ocean, than in the more eastern regions.

" If the plateau of New Spain is singularly cold in winter, the temperature in summer is far higher than could be inferred from the thermometrical observations made by Bouguer and Condamine in the Andes of Peru. It is to this heat, and to other local causes, that we must attribute the aridity which incommodes these beautiful countries. In fact, the interior, particularly an extensive portion of the plateau of Anahuac, is completely stripped of vegetation. The enormous mass of the Mexican Cordillera, and the immense extent of its plains, produce a reflection of the solar rays, which, at an equal height, is not observed in other mountainous countries of a more unequal surface. Independently of this circumstance, the land is so high, that its mere elevation, from the consequently diminished atmospheric pressure which is exerted on fluids by the rarefied air, must sensibly augment the evaporation that takes place from the

surface of these great plateaus. On the other hand, the Cordillera is not sufficiently elevated for any considerable number of its peaks to enter within the limit of perpetual snow. This snow, at the period of its minimum, in the month of September, does not descend, under the parallel of Mexico, lower than 14,465 feet; but in January, its boundary is met with as low as 12,139 feet. To the north, from latitude 20°, and especially from 22° to 30°, the rains, which continue only during the months of June, July, August, and September, are by no means frequent in the interior of the country. The ascending current, or column of heated air that rises from the plains, prevents the clouds from being precipitated in the form of rain, and thus saturating the dry, saline earth, almost denuded of shrubs. There are few springs in the mountains, which in a great measure are composed of porous amygdaloid and laminated or shattered porphyries. Instead of collecting in little subterraneous basins, the water filters through the earth, and loses itself in the crevices which have been opened by ancient volcanic eruptions. This water issues only at the base of the Cordillera. On the coasts, it forms a great number of rivers, the course of which, however, is very short.

"The aridity of the central table, and the want of trees, are extremely injurious to the working of the mines. These evils have sensibly increased since the arrival of Europeans in Mexico. Not only have the conquerors destroyed without planting, but, by artificially drying up extensive tracts of land, they have occasioned a still more important evil. The muriates of soda and of lime, the nitrate of potass, and other saline substances, cover the surface of the soil. They have spread themselves with a degree

of rapidity which the chemist feels it difficult to explain. Happily, this parched aridity of soil reigns only on the most elevated plains. A great part of the vast kingdom of New Spain may be classed with the most fertile countries of the earth. The shelving declivity of the Cordillera is exposed to humid winds and to frequent fogs; and vegetation, promoted by these aqueous vapours, displays an uncommon degree of beauty and luxuriance. The truth is, the humidity of the coasts, favouring the putrefaction of a prodigious mass of organic substances, proves the cause of diseases to which Europeans, and others not habituated to the climate, are exposed: for, under the burning sky of the tropics, the unhealthiness of the air is almost invariably a sure indication of extraordinary fertility in the soil. Nevertheless, with the exception of some sea-ports, and of some deep and humid valleys, where the natives suffer from intermittent fever, New Spain ought to be considered as a singularly healthy country." *

NATURAL HISTORY AND PRODUCTIONS.

Among the productions of Mexico, besides the precious metals, and the plants already mentioned as common to the hot regions and the West Indies, may be enumerated, various species of the palm-tree; † the pinnated calabash-tree; several balsam-

* Humboldt's Pol. Essay, vol. i. pp. 65—87; Malte-Brun's Geography, vol. v. pp. 286-91.

† The fruit of the cocoa was formerly considered in Mexico as an article of such prime importance, that it was used as currency, instead of small money, six nuts being equivalent to about a penny. It is from the Mexican language that we have derived

trees, producing odoriferous resins; four varieties of Mexican oak; indigenous species of the cherry, apple, walnut, and mulberry-trees; a species of strawberry, and the greater part of the fruits of Europe; the *metl*, *maguey*,* or American aloe (*agave Americana*),

the term *chocolatl*, softening the final syllable. The cocoa, however, Mr. Bullock states, is not the growth of this country, but is imported from Guatimala.

* Humboldt styles the maguey "the vine of the Aztecs." Plantations of it are found as far as the Aztec language is spoken. Next to the maize and the potatoe, this plant is the most useful of all the productions with which nature has supplied the mountaineers of equinoctial America. The plants are set in rows, about five or six feet apart; and in favourable situations, they come into bloom in about ten years, (Humboldt says, at the end of five,) at which period the valuable liquor is to be procured. "As soon as the owner perceives the plant preparing to throw up its long flower-stem, he cuts out the leaves which form its centre, and hollows it out into the shape of a bowl, at the same time removing most of the other leaves; so that the whole sap destined for their supply flows to the great stem, and is received by the bowl-shaped cavity, into which it runs with such rapidity, as to require to be emptied several times a day for two months. The liquor, when collected, is placed in jars or skins; it undergoes a slight fermentation, which takes place in a few days, and is immediately fit for drinking. Strangers prefer it fresh; but the natives seldom take it till it has acquired a strong taste and a disagreeable, fetid smell, denominated *fuerte*, when it is esteemed in high perfection." A very intoxicating brandy is distilled from the *pulque*, which is called *mexical*, or *aguardiente de maguey*. Some part of the plant is used medicinally; and the root, prepared with sugar, is made into *dulces*, or sweetmeats. The abundance of juice produced by a maguey of scarcely five feet in height, is the more astonishing, as the plantations are in the most arid ground, frequently on rocks scarcely covered with earth. The plant is not affected either by drought, hail, or cold. The vinous beverage is said to resemble cyder; its odour is that of putrid meat; but even Europeans, when they have been able to conquer the aversion inspired by the fetid smell, prefer the pulque to every other liquor.—BULLOCK, p. 281, HUMBOLDT'S *Pol. Essay*, vol. ii. pp. 472—81.

which furnishes the favourite liquor called *pulque*, while its fibres supply hemp and paper, and its prickles are used for pins and nails; the wonderful *cheirostemon platanoides*; * the nopal (*cactus cochinilifer*), upon which the cochineal insect feeds; the *convolvulus Xalapa*, or true jalap; guaiacum; sassafras; vanilla; the tamarind; a curious species of bombax, producing a cotton which unites the brilliance of silk with the strength of wool; and a splendid variety of flowering shrubs, which have already contributed to enrich the gardens of Europe.†

Throughout the table-land, maize forms the principal nourishment both of men and animals. The natives have various methods of preparing it. They are very fond of a gruel (*atolli*) made of the flour, and sweetened with honey. But their most common method of cooking it is in cakes (*tortillas*), which they eat with beans (*fricollis*) and chile pepper. They also make beverages of it, called *chicha*, *pulque de mahis*, or *tlaolli*; some resembling beer, and others cider.

The potatoe (*papas*) and yam are cultivated both on the table-land and in the low country; and in the latter, they raise a small quantity of rice. But, next to the Indian corn, the banana plant and the manioc root are the principal articles of food. The banana,

* This is the *arbol de las manitas*, or hand-plant. It is said, that some of these curious plants have lately been discovered on the western declivity of the Cordillera. The famous one in the Botanic Garden at Mexico, has attained the height of about 30 feet, and the stem is free from branches for about 15 feet from the root; it then branches out regularly. The corolla is a bright scarlet. The seed is contained in a pod about three inches long.

† Among others, the beautiful dahlia, and the brilliant *salvia fulgens*.

Humboldt remarks, is, for all the inhabitants of the torrid zone, what wheat, barley, and rye are for western Asia and Europe, and what the numerous varieties of rice are for the countries beyond the Indus. "I doubt," he says, "whether there is another plant on the globe, which, on so small a space of ground, can produce so considerable a mass of nutritive substance. Eight or nine months after the sucker has been planted, the banana commences to develope its clusters; and the fruit may be collected in the tenth or eleventh month. It would be difficult to describe the numerous preparations by which the Americans render the fruit of the *musa*, both before and after its maturity, a wholesome and agreeable diet. I have frequently seen, in ascending rivers, that the natives, after the greatest fatigues, make a complete dinner on a very small portion of manioc, and three bananas of the large kind. The ripe fruit of the musa, when exposed to the sun, is preserved like our figs. The skin becomes black, and takes a particular odour, which resembles that of smoked ham. The fruit in this state is called *platano passado*, and is an article of commerce in the intendency of Mechoacan. Meal is extracted from the *musa*, by cutting the green fruit in slices, drying it in the sun on a slope, and pounding it when it becomes friable. The flour, less used in Mexico than in the islands, may serve for the same use as flour from rice or maize. The facility with which the banana is reproduced from its roots, gives it an extraordinary advantage over fruit-trees, and even over the bread-fruit tree, which, for eight months in the year, is loaded with farinaceous fruit. The green fruit of the musa is eaten dressed, like the bread-fruit, or the potatoe; but the flour of the manioc is converted into bread, and furnishes to the

inhabitants of warm countries what the Spanish colonists call *pan de tierra caliente.*" The proper name of the plant, the root of which yields the nutritive flour of the manioc, is juca (the *jatropha manihot* of botanists). There are two species; the *juca dulce*, the root of which may be eaten without danger; and the *juca amarga* (bitter juca), which contains an active poison. It is the root of the latter, however, which is generally made into bread, the poisonous juice being carefully pressed out.

The inhabitants of the internal provinces, who are chiefly whites or reputed whites, live almost exclusively on wheaten bread. The Mexican wheat, cultivated in the temperate regions, is of the very best quality, and may be compared, Humboldt says, with the finest Andalusian grain. America is extremely rich in vegetables with nutritive roots, among which are the oca (*oxalis tuberosa*), the batate, and the igname (*dioscorea alata*). A small black bean is also very extensively cultivated, and the quantities of red pepper raised in all parts of the country, is almost incredible. "The Mexican," says Mr. Robinson, would rather go without bread, than lack chile with his meat. Both in its green and dried state, the quantity consumed is incredible. When mashed, and mixed with a little water, it is the universal sauce on the tables of the great; while with the poor, it forms a component part of their diet. More than one-third of the Mexican population live, throughout the year, chiefly on *tortillas* with chile spread on them, as butter is with us. On days of festivity, they have occasionally a change of diet, by the addition of a few eggs or a little broth; but they never relinquish their favourite chile. A stranger has great difficulty at first to bear with the food prepared with chile; but after his palate

has become accustomed to its stimulus, it ceases to excoriate, and he grows as fond of it as the Indians and Creoles." *

The zoology of Mexico is imperfectly known. Among the species peculiar to this country are, the *coëndou*, a kind of porcupine; the *apaxa*, or Mexican stag; the *conepalt*, of the weasel species; the *xolo-itzcuintli*, a species of wolf, distinguished by its total want of hair; the *techichi*, a species of dog without voice, which was eaten by the ancient Mexicans and the Spaniards, and is supposed to have become extinct; the *itzcuinte-potzoli*, another variety of the canine genus, distinguished by a short tail, a very small head, and a large hump on its back; the *cocyotic*, described by Mr. Bullock as seeming to connect the wolf, the fox, and the dog, resembling the wolf in shape and colour, but not so large; another very curious and diminutive species of wild dog, mentioned by the same traveller, found in the mountains to the north-east of Durango; they are from eight to eleven inches long, in form somewhat like a greyhound, with a large, high, projecting forehead, long ears, and a long tail; they burrow in the ground, and are said to be herbivorous. The bison and the musk-ox wander in immense herds in New Mexico and California. The latter province also abounds in rein-deer, a breed of wild sheep of remarkable size, and an animal called *berendos*, which is said to resemble the antelope. The jaguar, or American tiger,† is met with in the lower

* Humboldt's Political Essay, vol. ii. chap. ix.; Notes on Mexico, pp. 145—7; Robinson's Mexican Revolution, vol. i. p. 262; Bullock's Six Months in Mexico, chap. xxii.

† Rather, an ounce; the same, apparently, as the *felis paradalis* of Linnæus, and the ocelot of Cuvier.

and hot part of Mexico. The *miztli* * is described as resembling a lion without mane, but is of larger size. The Mexican bear is the same as that of Louisiana and Canada. The domestic animals of Europe conveyed to Mexico have multiplied there, as in other parts of the new continent, in a remarkable degree. A strong and beautiful breed of wild horses, descended from those brought over by the Spaniards, is found, in large herds, in the immense plains of New Mexico. The sheep are a coarse and neglected breed. On the eastern coast, and in the intendency of Durango, prodigious herds of horned cattle, of a breed resembling the black cattle in the south of Scotland, are seen grazing in all the great plains. Some of the farming establishments are said to number from 40 to 50,000 head of oxen and horses. Calves are not allowed to be killed, veal being prohibited by law. A fine breed of pigs is kept up, as an article of trade, in the environs of the capital.

With regard to the ornithology of Mexico, our information is still more meagre and defective; but Mr. Bullock has devoted a chapter to the description of the humming-bird, of which there have already been collected above a hundred varieties. The various species of this charming little race are scattered over the whole American continent and its islands, in almost every climate; being found, during the summer months, in Canada and Hudson's Bay. In Jamaica, Mr. Bullock procured the most diminutive species known, which is considerably smaller than some kinds of bee. In Mexico, the species are numerous, and mostly undescribed. This gentleman, during

* Mr. Bullock mentions the *puma*, or American lion, as the *felis discolor* of Linnæus, and the couguar of Cuvier. Is this the *miztli* of Hernandez?

his residence in the capital, had at one time in his possession nearly seventy in cages, which, by means of great care, he kept alive for several weeks. "The accounts," he says, "of their being so fierce and untameable as to beat themselves to death when confined, are not true; no bird is more easily reconciled to its new situation. It is true, they are seldom off the wing, but they never beat themselves against the cage, or the glass of a window. They remain, as it were, suspended in the air, in a space barely sufficient for them to move their wings; and the humming noise proceeds entirely from the surprising velocity with which they perform that motion, by which they will keep their bodies in the air, apparently motionless, for hours together. In each cage was placed a small earthen cup, about half filled with sugar and water of the consistence of a thin syrup: in this, various flowers had been inserted, principally the yellow bell-shaped corolla of the great aloe (*agave Americana*); the end of which next the stem being cut off, permitted the liquid to flow into the flower, into which the little prisoners were constantly inserting their long bifid tongues, and drawing up its luscious contents. This operation was generally, like most of the actions of the bird, performed on the wing; but they sometimes alighted on the flower, perching against its sides in an upright position, and pumping up the mucilaginous liquid. It is probable, the whole of them feed on insects; numbers, I am certain, do so, having watched them attentively in the Botanic Garden at Mexico, in pursuit of their minute prey; and in the yard of the house in which I resided at Themascaltepec, one of them took entire possession of a pomegranate-tree in blossom, on which he sat the whole day, catching the small flies that came to the flowers.

Naturalists have therefore fallen into error in asserting that these birds live entirely on the saccharine substance contained in flowers, as I have very frequently seen them take flies and other insects on the wing, and have on dissection found them in their stomachs.

" I have frequently watched with much amusement the cautious peregrination of the hummingbird, who, advancing beneath a spider's web, entered the various labyrinths and cells in search of entangled flies; but, as the larger spiders did not tamely surrender their booty, the invader was often compelled to retreat: being within a few feet, I could observe all their evolutions with great precision. The active little bird generally passed once or twice round the court, as if to reconnoitre his ground, and commenced his attack by going carefully under the nets of the wily insect, and seizing by surprise the smallest entangled flies, or those that were most feeble. In ascending the angular traps of the spider, great care and skill were required; sometimes he had scarcely room for his little wings to perform their office, and the least deviation would have entangled him in the complex machinery of the web, and involved him in ruin. It was only the works of the smaller spider that he durst attack, as the largest rose to the defence of their citadels, when the besieger would shoot off like a sunbeam, and could be traced only by the luminous glow of his refulgent colours. The bird generally spent about ten minutes in this predatory excursion, and then alighted on a branch of an Avocata to rest and refresh himself, placing his crimson starlike breast to the sun, which then presented all the glowing fire of the ruby, and surpassed in lustre the diadem of monarchs. Europeans who have seen only

the stuffed remains of these little feathered gems in museums, have been charmed with their beautiful appearance; but those who have examined them whilst living, displaying their moving crests, throats, and tails, like the peacock in the sun, can never look with pleasure on their mutilated forms. I have carefully preserved about two hundred specimens, in the best possible manner, yet they are still but the shadow of what they were in life. The reason is obvious; for the sides of the laminæ, or fibres of each feather, being of a different colour from the surface, will change when seen in a front or oblique direction; and as each lamina or fibre turns upon the axis of the quill, the least motion, when living, causes the feathers to change suddenly to the most opposite hues. Thus the one from Nootka Sound changes its expanded throat from the most vivid fire-colour to light green; the Topaz-throated does the same; and the Mexican Star changes from bright crimson to blue.

"The sexes vary greatly in the plumage in many of the species; so much so, that it is with difficulty we recognise them. The male and female of the Mexican Star could not have been known had they not been seen constantly together, and proved to be so by dissection. They breed in Mexico in June and July; and the nest is a beautiful specimen of the architectural talent of these birds: it is neatly constructed with cotton, or the down of thistles, to which is fastened on the outside, by some glutinous substance, a white flat lichen resembling ours.

"The female lays two eggs, perfectly white, and large for the size of the bird; and the Indians informed me, they were hatched in three weeks by the male and female sitting alternately. When attending their young, they attack any bird indiscriminately

that approaches the nest. Their motions, when under the influence of anger or fear, are very violent, and their flight rapid as an arrow; the eye cannot follow them, but the shrill piercing shriek which they utter on the wing may be heard when the bird is invisible, and often led to their destruction by preparing me for their approach. They attack the eyes of the larger birds, and their sharp needle-like bill is a truly formidable weapon in this kind of warfare. Nothing can exceed their fierceness when one of their own species invades their territory during the breeding season. Under the influence of jealousy they become perfect furies; their throats swell, their crests, tails, and wings expand; they fight in the air, (uttering a shrill noise,) till one falls exhausted to the ground. I witnessed a combat of this kind near Otumba, during a heavy fall of rain, every separate drop of which I supposed sufficient to have beaten the puny warriors to the earth.

"In sleeping, they frequently suspend themselves by the feet, with their heads downwards, in the manner of some parrots.

"These birds were great favourites of the ancient Mexicans. They used the feathers as ornaments for their superb mantles in the time of Montezuma, and in embroidering the pictures so much extolled by Cortes. Their name signifies in the Indian language, beams or locks of the sun. They are still worn by the Indian ladies as ornaments for the ears." *

Among the other winged tribes, the same traveller mentions various species of eagles, vultures, beautiful hawks, orioles, cuckoos, crows, and the Virginia nightingale (*loxia cardinalis*), with plumage much more resplendently scarlet than any found in the

* Bullock's Six Months in Mexico, chap. xxi.

United States. There are numerous species of aquatic birds, and turkeys, fowls, and pigeons are furnished in large quantities for the market of the capital.

POPULATION.

The Mexican population is composed of seven races: 1. Europeans, vulgarly called *Chapetons* and *Gachupins;* 2. Creoles, or native whites of European extraction; 3. Mestizoes, the offspring of whites and Indians; 4. Mulattoes, the offspring of whites and negroes; 5. aboriginal Indians, of the pure copper-coloured race; 6. African negroes, and their descendants; 7. Zamboes, or Chinoes, the offspring of negroes and Indians. To these may be added, many individuals of Asiatic origin, numbers of Chinese and Malays having settled in Mexico, owing to the frequent communication between Acapulco and the Philippine Islands; and natives of the Canary Islands, who are generally designated by the name of *Isleños* (islanders), and rank as whites. They are for the most part overseers and agents of plantations.

The number of copper-coloured Indians of the pure race, is supposed to be two millions and a half, forming about two-fifths of the entire population. In the intendencies of Guanaxuato, Valladolid, Oaxaca, and La Puebla, they amount to three-fifths; but, in the north of New Spain and the internal provinces, they are rarely met with. When the Spaniards conquered the country, they found few inhabitants in the region north of the parallel of 20°. Those provinces were inhabited by the Chichimecs and the Otomites, two pastoral nations, whose hordes were thinly scattered over a vast territory, and who withdrew as the conquerors advanced towards the north. Agriculture and

civilisation were found concentrated in the plains south of the river of Santiago, especially between the valley of Mexico and the province of Oaxaca. From the seventh to the thirteenth century, population seems in general to have continually flowed from north to south. From the regions north of the Rio Gila, issued the warlike nations who successively inundated the country of Anahuac. The Toltecs first appeared in the year 648; the Chichimecs in 1170; the Nahuatlacs in 1178; the Acolhuans and Aztecs in 1196. The Toltecs introduced the cultivation of maize and cotton; they built cities, made roads, and constructed those great pyramids which are among the most interesting remains in this country. They were acquainted with the art of hieroglyphic writing, could found metals, and their tools were sufficiently tempered to cut the hardest stones. They had a solar year more perfect than that of the Greeks and Romans.* Humboldt supposes that the Toltecs, or Aztecs, (both of these tribes being of the same family,) might be a part of those Hiong-nues who, according to the Chinese historians, emigrated under their leader Punon, and were lost in the northern parts of Siberia, from whence they might easily reach the north-western coast of the new continent.† This

* Their complicated method of computing cycles of years, was identically the same with that made use of by the Hindoos, Thibetans, Chinese, and Japanese.—HUMBOLDT'S *Researches*, vol. i. p. 301.

† On the north-west coast, between Nootka Sound and Cook's River, especially under the parallel of 57° N., the natives display a decided taste for hieroglyphic paintings. The Iroquois and the Hurons also, made hieroglyphic paintings on wood, strikingly resembling those of the Mexicans. On the American coast nearest to Asia, along Behring's Straits, between lat. 67° and 64° 10′, we find a great number of huts frequented by Siberian hunters, which

nation of warrior-shepherds, he remarks, has more than once changed the face of oriental Asia, and desolated, under the name of Huns, the finest parts of civilised Europe. It is certain, that the Toltecs have several traits in common with the Tshouds, or ancient inhabitants of Siberia. The Toltecs, the Chichimecs (from whom the inhabitants of Tlascala are descended), the Acolhuans, the Nahuatlacs, and the Aztecs, spoke the same language, and followed the same worship, being connected by an affinity somewhat analogous to that which is observable in the Germans, Norwegians, Goths, and Danes, of the Teutonic race.* Humboldt

are not more than from 30 to 40 leagues distant from those of the Tshoutskies of Asiatic Russia. The intermediate channel is filled with desert islands, which would facilitate the navigation. The Tshoutskies live at perpetual war with the Americans. "However," says Humboldt, "in order to conceive that Asiatic tribes established on the table-land of Chinese Tartary should pass from the old to the new continent, it is not necessary to have recourse to a transmigration at such high latitudes. A chain of small islands stretches from Corea and Japan to the southern cape of the peninsula of Kamschatka, between the 33° and the 51° of N. latitude. The great island of Tchoka, connected with the continent by an immense sand-bank, (under the parallel of 52°) facilitates communication between the mouths of the Amour and the Kurile islands. Another Archipelago, by which the great basin of Behring is terminated on the south, advances from the peninsula of Alaska 400 leagues towards the west. The most western of the Aleutian islands is only 144 leagues distant from the eastern coast of Kamschatka; and this distance is also divided into two nearly equal parts by the Behring and Mednoi islands, situated under lat. 55°. Asiatic tribes might have gone, by means of these islands, from one continent to the other, without going higher on the continent of Asia than the parallel of 55°, and by a passage of not more than 24 or 36 hours. The north-west winds which, during a great part of the year, blow in these latitudes, favour the navigation from Asia to America between lat. 50° and 60° N."—*Pol. Essay*, vol. ii. p. 343.

* Humboldt elsewhere gives a different enumeration of these tribes, distinguishing the Tlascaltecs from the Chichimecs or

supposes that, of the other nations of Mexico, the Otomites, the Olmecs, the Cuitlatecs, the Zacatecs, and the Tarascs reached the equinoctial region of New Spain prior to the Toltecs, and that they are to be considered as the more ancient family.* The great variety of languages still spoken in Mexico, proves that the population has been formed by the successive migration of various tribes. The number of these languages exceeds twenty, of which fourteen have grammars and dictionaries tolerably complete; viz. the Mexican or Aztec, the Otomite, the Tarasc, the Zapotec, the Mistec, the Maye or Yucatan, the Totonac, the Popolouc, the Matlazing, the Huastec, the Mixed, the Caquiquel, the Taraumar, the Tepehuan, and the Cora. Most of these, far from being merely dialects of the same language, differ as widely as the Greek and the German.† The Mexican is the most widely diffused, being spoken from lat. 37° N., to the lake of

Shishimecs, and giving them all the general name of Anahuatlacs, that is, inhabitants of the banks of rivers.—*Researches*, vol. i. pp. 82, 214.

* The Aztecs knew not with certainty what tribe had inhabited the country of Anahuac before the Toltecs, to whom they ascribed the pyramidal monuments which they found there. It is possible, Humboldt remarks, that those great edifices may be of yet higher antiquity than the Toltec invasion. "We ought not to be astonished that no history of any American nation should go higher than the seventh century, and that the annals of the Toltecs should be as uncertain as those of the Pelasgi and the Ausonians. The learned M. Schloezer has clearly proved, that the history of the North of Europe reaches no higher than the tenth century; an epoch at which Mexico was in a more advanced state of civilisation than Denmark, Sweden, and Russia."—*Ibid.* vol. i. p. 83.

† "The American languages are as distinct from each other as they are from the Tartar tongues. This want of analogy ought not, however, to be alleged as a proof against the opinion, that the American nations have had ancient communications with eastern Asia. The different groupes of Tartarian nations vary as much in

Nicaragua, a length of 400 leagues: it is not so sonorous, but is almost as diffuse and rich as that of the Incas.* Of this, there exist eleven printed grammars. Next to the Aztec, the Otomite is the most general language. All the American languages are characterised by one striking feature in their structure: like the Coptic and the Cantabrian, they are formed, not by inflexion, but by compounding words, or, what Humboldt terms, aggregation. They might be termed *unorganised* languages, having no internal principle of development, for every element of the sesquipe-

this respect. The Oigours speak a language differing more from that of the Mantchous, than the German from the Latin."—HUMBOLDT'S *Researches*, vol. i. p. 306.

* "Nothing," says Humboldt, "strikes Europeans more in the Aztec, Nahuatl, or Mexican language, than the excessive length of the words. This length does not always depend on their being compounded, as in the Greek, the German, and the Sanscrit, but on the manner of forming the substantive, the plural, or the superlative. A kiss is called *tetennamiquiliztli*; a word formed from the verb *tennamiqui*, to embrace, and the additive particles, *te* and *liztli*. In the same manner we have *tlatolana*, to ask, and *tetlatolaniliztli*, a demand; *tlayhiouiltia*, to torment, and *tetlayhiouiltiliztli*, torment. To form the plural, the Aztecs in several words double the first syllable; as *miztli*, a cat; *mimiztin*, cats: *tochtli*, a rabbit; *totochtin*, rabbits. *Tin* is the termination which indicates the plural. Sometimes, the duplication is made in the midst of a word; for instance, *ichpochtli*, a girl; *ichpopochtin*, girls: *telpochtli*, a boy; *telpopochtin*, boys. The most remarkable example I have met with of a real composition of words, is found in the word *amatlacuilolitquitcatlaxtlahuilli*, which signifies, the reward-given-to-the-messenger-who-carries-a-paper-on-which-is-painted-tidings. This word, which forms by itself an Alexandrine line, contains *amatl*, paper (of the agave); *cuiloa*, to paint, or trace hieroglyphics; and *tlaxtlahuilli*, the wages or salary of a workman." The word *notlazomahuiztespixcatatzin*, which signifies, venerable-priest-whom-I-cherish-as-my-father, is used by the Mexicans in addressing the priests. In the Aztec language, the letters B, D, F, G, and R, are wanting."—HUMBOLDT'S *Researches*, vol. ii. p. 246; *Pol. Essay*, vol. i. p. 139.

dalian compound is a distinct word. Hence arise an enormous multiplicity of tenses, and an apparent complication of structure, which have been mistaken by some writers for a perfection, but which invariably indicate a state but one remove from barbarism. Humboldt compares the American languages to complicated machines, the wheels of which are exposed; the artifice of their construction is visible. Such languages, he remarks, seem themselves to oppose obstacles to the improvement of the mind, being "unfurnished with that rapid movement, that interior life, to which the inflexion of the root is favourable, and which gives so many charms to works of imagination."*

None of these nations were acquainted with alphabetic characters; and this circumstance will serve to account for the astonishing variety of the American dialects. These, according to the same traveller, may, without the least exaggeration, be stated at some hundreds; a fact which, when connected with the comparatively few languages spoken in Asia and Europe, he regards as a very striking phenomenon. Yet, in the neighbourhood of Mount Caucasus and the Caspian Sea, a few barbarians, ignorant of the art of writing, are said to be divided into more nations, speaking peculiar languages radically different from each other, than the whole of civilised Europe.† Previously to the invention or the knowledge of alphabetic characters,

* Humboldt's Pers. Nar. vol. iii. p. 270.—The learned traveller refers to the supposed existence of Coptic literature as an exception to his own observation. "What a scaffolding of little monosyllabic and dissyllabic forms is added to the verb, and to the substantive, in the Coptic language!" Were this the place, however, it might be shewn, that the word literature is wholly inapplicable to hieroglyphic records.

† Quar. Rev. vol. x. p. 254.

language must of necessity be very arbitrary and variable. In unwritten dialects, even provincial variations are apt to degenerate into distinct languages. Thus, every county of England had at one time its peculiar vocabulary and pronunciation; and many of these dialects differ not less widely than distinct languages. In the progress of civilisation, these are melted down into one common conventional medium, and the useless synonymes are discarded. But, among pastoral tribes having little or no intercommunication, and possessing no written character, the peculiarities of articulation and nomenclature are likely to become more and more marked, as necessity leads them respectively to invent new terms, or as old ones become corrupted. There seems, moreover, to be a disposition common to children, barbarians, and the vulgar every where, to coin new phrases, to which they attach their peculiar associations. Children, however, are found to observe, in inventing words, the analogy of language; and, except when they mean to imitate sounds, what they invent are new inflexions, rather than new elements. But in languages destitute of inflexions, like the American dialects, the composition of words is altogether arbitrary, and the widest possible scope is given to the capricious changes introduced by varying fashions, and customs. These considerations may be thought sufficiently to explain the phenomenon in question.

The Indians of New Spain are described by Humboldt as bearing a general resemblance to those who inhabit Canada, Florida, Peru, and Brazil. "They have the same swarthy and copper colour, flat and smooth hair, small beard, squat body, long eye, with the corner directed upwards towards the temples, prominent cheek-bones, thick lips, and an expression

of gentleness in the mouth, strongly contrasted with a gloomy and severe look." There is, however, a considerable diversity of feature and physiological character among the different nations, which, though not detected by the hasty observation of the European stranger, is not less essential than the difference between the Circassian, the Moor, and the Persian. Thus, the Indians of Tlascala differ widely in their form from the Chichimecs of the northern provinces. It is remarkable, that the natives of Mexico have a more swarthy complexion than the inhabitants of the warmer climates of South America.* The Mexicans, particularly those of the Aztec and Otomite race, have more beard than any of the Southern tribes, and almost all the Indians in the neighbourhood of the capital wear small mustachios.† To a great degree of muscular strength, the copper-coloured natives add the advantage of being rarely subject to any deformity. In Mexico, they generally attain an advanced age, especially the women, who frequently reach a hundred years of age; and both the Mexican and the Peruvian Indians preserve their muscular strength to the last. Humboldt states, that their hair scarcely ever turns grey,—that it is far

* Ulloa remarked, that neither heat nor cold produces any sensible change in the colour; "so that the Indians of the Cordilleras of Peru are easily confounded with those of the hottest plains; and those who live under the line, cannot be distinguished by the colour from those who inhabit the fortieth parallel of north or south latitude."

† The Indians who inhabit the torrid zone of South America, Humboldt states, have generally some beard, and it is increased by shaving. The apparent deficiency of beard is by no means peculiar to the American race, for many hordes of Eastern Asia have scarcely any. The negroes of Congo and the Caribs are also beardless.

more rare to find an Indian than a negro with grey hairs; but this is at variance with the testimony of Ulloa. He adds, that the Indians would undoubtedly attain a very great longevity, were it not for their excessive use of intoxicating liquors. In New Spain, drunkenness is most common among the Indians who inhabit the valley of Mexico and the environs of Puebla and Tlascala, wherever the *maguey* (or *agave Americana*) is cultivated on a large scale. The Mexican Indian is described by Humboldt as grave, melancholic, and silent, so long as he is not under the influence of intoxication. He loves to throw a mysterious air over the most indifferent actions. The more violent passions are seldom painted in his features; but there is something terrific in the change, when he passes all at once from a state of absolute repose to violent and ungovernable agitation. The Peruvian Indian displays more gentleness of manners: the energy of the Mexican is apt to degenerate into ferocity. This is especially the case with the inhabitants of Tlascala, who are still distinguished by a certain haughtiness which seems to bespeak a remembrance of the independence of their ancestors. No race of men appear to be more destitute of imagination. There cannot, Humboldt says, exist a more marked contrast, than that which is presented by the impetuous vivacity of the Congo negro, and the apparent phlegm of the Indian. Yet, when the latter attains a certain degree of civilisation, "he displays a great facility of apprehension, a judicious mind, a natural logic, and a subtlety in seizing the finest differences in the comparison of objects." The Mexicans display a great aptitude in the arts of imitation, and a much greater skill in those which are purely mechanical. Humboldt was astonished

at what they were able to execute in carving, with a bad knife, on the hardest wood. They are fond of painting, but have been servilely imitating for these three hundred years, the models which the Europeans imported with them at the conquest. Their music and dancing partake of the want of gayety which characterises them. Their songs are terrific and melancholy. The Indian women shew more vivacity than the men; but they take no share in the dance, their only business on such occasions being to present their lords with *pulque*, or other fermented liquors. The Mexicans have preserved their fondness for flowers, which was noticed by Cortes. This taste, which indicates a relish for the beautiful, one is astonished to find in a people among whom a sanguinary worship, and the frequency of human sacrifices, might be thought to have extinguished all sensibility and kindly sentiment. In the great market-place of Mexico, the Indian fruiterer appears seated behind an entrenchment of fresh herbs, and garlands of flowers and nosegays are suspended round his shop or stall, which are renewed every day. The European, says M. Humboldt, cannot fail to be struck with the care and elegance which the natives display in distributing the fruits, which they sell in small baskets of very light wood, ornamented with odoriferous flowers.

Upon the whole, the state of civilisation among the Mexican Indians, may be considered as very nearly akin to that of the Chinese and Japanese, to whom, in many respects, they bear a resemblance. In the colour of the skin and hair, the defective beard, the high cheek-bones, and the direction of the eyes, they present the marks of an affinity to the Mongol race.

" We cannot refuse to admit," says the learned traveller so often cited, " that the human species does not contain races resembling one another more than the Americans, Mongols, Mantchous, and Malays." There are, however, some essential peculiarities by which they are distinguished from each other. The cranium of the American differs materially from that of the Mongol, exhibiting a facial line more inclined, though straighter than that of the negro; and there is no race in which there is so slight a projection of the forehead. The cheek-bones are almost as prominent as in the Mongol, but not so sharply angular, and the under-jaw is larger than in the negro. " Perhaps," adds M. Humboldt, " this race of copper-coloured men, comprehended under the general name of American Indians, is a mixture of Asiatic tribes and the aborigines of this vast continent; and it is not unlikely, that the figures with enormous aquiline noses observed in the Mexican hieroglyphic paintings preserved at Vienna, Veletri, and Rome, indicate the physiognomy of some races now extinct." Where the aborigines came from, the learned author does not attempt to inform us. The paintings in question undoubtedly suggest the idea of a race distinct from the present indigenous tribes; but, as the figures distinguished by the peculiarity referred to, appear, for the most part, to be either priests or other dignified personages, it admits of a question, whether those extraordinary individuals might not be foreigners, in representing whose appearance the painter would naturally exaggerate the more prominent features. Or if not, they are less likely to have belonged to the ruder aboriginal race, than to the Asiatic ancestry of the conquerors or intruders. It is possible, that

the Aztec priests might be of a different race from the present Mexican Indians; and few, if any of them, escaped the exterminating sword of Cortes.*

* Out of eighty-three American languages, which have been examined by Professor Vater, only one hundred and thirty-seven roots have hitherto been recognised, which are found in the languages of the Mantchou Tartars and Mongols, the Celtic, the Biscayan, and the Esthonian. This fact, Humboldt considers as an incontestable proof of the early separation of the American race. On the other hand, it seems to indicate an original affinity. — See Humboldt's Researches, vol. i. p. 249. It is remarkable, that the legends of Mexico, Peru, and Brazil, all unite in ascribing the civilisation of the country to a *foreigner*. As the Indians of the southern peninsula ascribed the first cultivation of the mandioc to their Payé Zome, so the Mexican Indians adore a mysterious personage under the name of *Quetzalcoatl*, who is said to have landed at the head of a band of strangers from the north. Their dress was black, long, and loose, says Torquemada, like the Turkish dress, or the cassock, open before, without hood or cape, the sleeves full, but not reaching quite to the elbow; and such dresses were, in his time, still used by the natives in some of their dances, in commemoration of the event. Their leader was a white man, florid, and with a large beard. He taught the natives to cut the green stones, and to work silver and gold. Every thing flourished in his reign. He never suffered blood to be shed in sacrifice, but ordered bread, and flowers, and incense to be offered up instead. The Mexican clergy are disposed to identify this person with the apostle St. Thomas; and many coincidences in the cosmogony and traditions of the Aztecs, together with the universal belief that white men, with long beards and sanctity of manners, had changed their religion and political system, favour the hypothesis that, at some remote epoch, Christianity had been preached in the new continent. Humboldt, however, remarks, that the same traditions, of high antiquity, are found both among the followers of Brahma and among the Shamans of the Steppes of Eastern Tartary. "It is no way doubtful," he remarks, "that Nestorianism, mingled with the *dogmata* of the Bouddhists and the Shamans, spread through Mantchou Tartary into the north-east of Asia. We may therefore suppose, with some appearance of reason, that Christian ideas have been communicated by the same means to the Mexican nations; especially to the inhabitants of that northern region from which the

The introduction of Christianity has had no other effect, Humboldt says, on the Indians of Mexico, than to substitute new ceremonies and symbols for the rites of a sanguinary worship. "Dogma has not succeeded to dogma, but ceremony to ceremony. The natives know nothing of religion but the exterior forms of worship. The festivals of the church, the fire-works with which they are accompanied, the processions, mingled with dances and whimsical disguises, are a most fertile source of amusement for the lower classes." * The Romish priests favoured the amalgamation of ideas by which Christianity was confounded in the minds of the natives with the Mexican mythology, and the Holy Ghost was identified with the sacred eagle of the Aztecs. If any stress can be laid on the anecdote mentioned by a recent English traveller, it would seem doubtful whether some taint of the old superstition does not yet remain among some of the Indians. Mr. Bullock had obtained leave to disinter, and take casts from, a colossal image of the goddess Teoyamiqui.†

Toltecs emigrated, and which we must consider as the *officina virorum* of the New World."—HUMBOLDT'S *Researches*, vol. i. p. 197.—SOUTHEY'S *Madoc, Notes*, vol. ii. p. 235.

* "In the province of Pasto, on the ridge of the Cordillera of the Andes, I have seen Indians, masked and adorned with small tinkling bells, perform savage dances round the altar, while a monk of St. Francis elevated the host."—HUMBOLDT, *Pol. Essay*, vol. i. p. 168.

† The idol is thus described: "This colossal and horrible monster is hewn out of one solid block of basalt, nine feet high. Its outlines give an idea of a deformed human figure, uniting all that is horrible in the tiger and the rattle-snake: instead of arms, it is supplied with two large serpents, and its drapery is composed of wreathed snakes, interwoven in the most disgusting manner, and the sides terminating in the wings of a vulture. Its feet are those of the tiger, with claws extended in the act of seizing its prey, and between them lies the head of another rattle-snake, which seems descending from the body of the idol. Its decorations accord with

During the time it was exposed, the greater part of the by-standers who crowded to see it, expressed the most decided anger and contempt. Not so the Indians: not a smile or a word escaped them. In reply to a joke of one of the students of the university, an old Indian remarked: "It is true, we have three very good Spanish gods, but we might still have been allowed to keep a few of those of our ancestors." Mr. Bullock was informed, that chaplets of flowers had been placed on the idol by natives who had stolen to the spot, unseen, in the evening for that purpose.*

The social condition of the Mexican Indians when considered *en masse*, is represented by M. Humboldt as presenting a picture of extreme misery. Banished into the most barren districts, and indolent from nature, and still more so from their political situation, the natives live only from hand to mouth. Yet, a few families are met with, who, under an appearance of poverty, conceal considerable wealth. "Mexico is the country of inequality. No where does there exist so fearful a difference in the distribution of fortune, civilisation, cultivation of the soil, and population. The magnificence and luxury of the capital and other cities, the costly temples and gorgeous exhibitions in

its horrid form, having a large necklace composed of human hearts, hands, and skulls, and fastened together by the entrails,—the deformed breasts of the idol only remaining uncovered. It has evidently been painted in natural colours, which must have added greatly to the terrible effect it was intended to inspire in its votaries."

* According to one Spanish historian (Acosta), the Indians were not, however, so well contented with their gods on the arrival of the Spaniards. He cites an old Indian chief as repelling the charge of hastily changing his religion, by the assertion, that they were so wearied and discontented with these gods as to have deliberated about leaving them in good earnest and adopting others.—HUMBOLDT, *Pol. Essay*, vol. i. p. 165.

religious processions, contrasted with the gloomy visages and wretched appearance of the Mexican poor, mark the reign of extortion, superstition, and ignorance.* In the cities, the poorer classes are still more numerous and wretched than in the country. In the city of Mexico, the *leperos* (as they are termed) were reckoned at nearly a fourth of the population. It is but just to remark, however, that the state of the Mexican peasantry was not much less deplorable, prior to the conquest, under the grievous oppression of the Aztec feudalism. The ancient distinction between the patrician and plebeian classes, is still preserved in the twofold division of the indigenous population into tributary Indians and cacique or noble Indians. The latter, by the Spanish laws, ought to have participated

* "No part of the earth exhibits such striking and such monstrous contrasts of wealth and misery, as well in the country as in the cities, as Mexico. We behold the proprietor of a *hacienda* decked in a style of the most costly, but awkward grandeur. He has on a pair of country-made boots, which cost from 50 to 100 dollars; large spurs inlaid with gold and silver; a superb horse, with a bridle and saddle which cost from 150 to 300 dollars; a cloak or *mangas* richly embroidered, and full of gold or silver buttons, laces, and fringe. He lives in a spacious house, within whose walls every luxury is to be found that the country affords; but when he sallies forth, he is lost amid a groupe of half-naked, badly-fed wretches, whose only dress is sheep-skins, if in the country; or, if in a town, their shoulders are covered by an old blanket or sheet, serving them for a partial covering by day, and a bed at night. No species of attention is ever paid by the lord of the soil to the comfort or wants of his tenants or vassals; and a more wretched race of cultivators does not exist under the canopy of heaven, than the Indian labourers on these estates, and in the mining districts. Twenty-five cents, or two reals, are the daily wages of a labourer, out of which pittance he has to clothe and feed himself and family, and to pay the government and parochial extortions. No wonder, therefore, that he rarely tastes of animal food. In fact, the situation of a Georgia field-negro is superior, notwithstanding all that the royal writers say to the contrary."—ROBINSON'S *Memoirs*, vol. i. pp. 263, 4.

in the privileges of the Castilian nobility; but it is now difficult to distinguish, by their exterior, their manners, or mode of living, the hereditary cacique from the vassal. The dress common to both, is the Mexican tunic, of a coarse quality and a blackish brown colour, and they generally go barefoot.* Yet, the common people shew the noble families a respect which indicates the distance prescribed by the ancient Aztec hierarchy, while they still exert a measure of their former prerogatives in oppressing the tributary class. Exercising the magistracy in the Indian villages, it is they who levy the capitation-tax, and they make use of their authority to extort petty sums for their own profit.† In point of grossness of manners, ignorance, and want of civilisation, they are quite on a level with the lower class. At Cholula, where there are no caciques, the tributary Indians are distinguished by their sobriety, and gentle, peaceable manners; and among them are found several wealthy families. The manners of the Cholulans, Humboldt

* The dress of the poorer classes and Indians varies in the different provinces. In the capital, the dress of the Indian men is described by Mr. Bullock as consisting of a straw hat; close jacket with short sleeves, of dark-coloured coarse woollen or leather; short breeches, open at the knees, also of leather, or sometimes of undressed goat's skin, with the hair outwards; and under this, full calico trowsers reaching to the middle of the leg. Sometimes sandals of leather are worn. The women appear in little more than a petticoat and short jacket, with their long raven tresses plaited with red tape.—BULLOCK, p. 218.

† This disposition in those who are themselves politically degraded, to indemnify themselves by oppressing all beneath them, exhibits itself in all nations similarly circumstanced. Humboldt instances the extortionate conduct of the Jewish rabbins. The conduct of the Wallachian *boyars*, or nobles, is a case more in point. Under the Turkish despotism, pasha, bey, and aga, Turk, Greek, and Arab, are alike oppressors to the extent of their power.

says, exhibit a singular contrast to those of their neighbours the Tlascalans, of whom a great number pretend to be the descendants of the highest nobility, and who increase their poverty by a litigious spirit, and a restless, turbulent disposition.

The Indians were considered by the first conquerors as their property; they were sold into captivity, and thousands perished under the harsh treatment of their inhuman masters, until the noble efforts of Las Casas drew the attention of the Court of Spain to their sufferings. Commissioners were then despatched to inquire into these abuses; but the measures which were adopted with a view to alleviate the condition of the Indians, were perverted by the avarice and cunning of the conquerors to their disadvantage. The system of *encomiendas* was introduced, by which the remains of the conquered population were shared out among the *conquistadores*, and placed under the superintendence and protection of certain masters. The *encomendero* was bound to live in the district which contained the Indians of his *encomienda*, to watch over their conduct, instruct and civilise them, and protect them from persecution or imposition. In return for these services, they received a tribute in labour or in produce. But, in consequence of this attempt at melioration, slavery only assumed a more systematic and legalised form; and the abuse of the protecting regulations followed close upon their institution. A great number of the finest *encomiendas* were distributed among the monks, and religion became degraded by its participation in the servitude of the people. This partition of the Indians attached them to the soil, and the slave frequently took the family name of his master: hence, many Indian families bear Spanish names, although their blood has never been mingled with the European.

Such was the state of the Mexican peasantry in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In the eighteenth, their situation was somewhat improved by the abolition of the *encomiendas;* and King Charles III. prohibited at the same time the *repartimientos* by which the *corregidors* arbitrarily constituted themselves the creditors, and virtually the masters of the natives, by furnishing them, at extravagant prices, with horses, mules, and clothes, in consideration of which they became entitled to the profits of their labour. The establishment of intendencies during the ministry of the Count de Galvez, was an important benefit conferred on the Indian population. Under the superintendence of these governors, the minute vexations to which the cultivator was incessantly exposed from the subaltern Spanish and Indian magistracy, were greatly diminished. A previous regulation in their favour had given them magistrates of their own choice; but it was found necessary to appoint over these a corregidor, to prevent the Indian alcaldes from abusing their authority. The Indians were exempted from every sort of indirect impost; they paid no *alcavala;* and the law allowed them full liberty in the sale of their productions. The impost of the *tributos*, which was a direct capitation-tax, paid by all male Indians between the ages of ten and fifty, had also been considerably reduced in several of the intendencies. Besides this, they were liable only to the payment of parochial dues and offerings.* Such was the

* In 1800, according to Humboldt, in the bishopric of Mechoacan, and the greater part of Mexico, the capitation-tax amounted to only 11 francs, (9*s.* 2*d.*) The parochial taxes consisted of 10 francs for baptism, 20 francs for a marriage certificate, 20 francs for the burial fee, and from 25 to 30 francs for "voluntary offerings."

state of things prior to the Revolution. But, while the legislature appeared thus to favour the Indians with regard to imposts, it deprived them of the most important civil rights, and, affecting to treat them as perpetual minors, declared null and void every act signed by a copper-coloured native, and every obligation which he might contract beyond the value of fifteen francs. It is possible, that the intention of the legislature was, to protect them against being held in bondage on the plea of debt, by those who had constituted themselves their creditors for this purpose; but the effect was, to render thousands incapable of entering into any binding contract, and to place an insurmountable barrier between the Indians and the other castes.

"In fact," says the Bishop of Mechoacan, in a memoir presented to the Spanish monarch in 1799, "the Indians and the races of mixed blood are in a state of extreme humiliation. The colour peculiar to the Indians, their ignorance, and especially their poverty, remove them to an infinite distance from the whites. The privileges which the laws seem to concede to the Indians, are of small advantage to them; perhaps, they are rather hurtful. Shut up within the narrow boundaries (the radius of which is only 542 yards) assigned by an ancient law to the Indian villages, the natives may be said to have no individual property; and they are bound to cultivate the common property, without the hope of ever reaping the fruit of their labours. The new regulations of the intendancies direct that the natives shall no longer receive assistance from the general funds (*caxas de communidades*) without special permission of the Board of Finances of Mexico. The common property has been farmed out by the intendants; and the produce of the labour

of the natives is poured into the royal treasury. The intendant of Valladolid sent, in 1793, more than a million of francs (41,670*l.*) to Madrid, which had been accumulating for twelve years. The king was told, that it was a spontaneous and patriotic gift from the Indians of Mechoacan to their sovereign, to aid in the prosecution of the war against England!

"The law prohibits the mixture of castes: it prohibits the whites from taking up their residence in Indian villages; and it prevents the natives from establishing themselves among the Spaniards. This state of insulation opposes obstacles to civilisation. The Indians are governed by themselves: all the subaltern magistrates are of the copper-coloured race. In every village we find eight or ten old Indians who live at the expense of the rest, in the most complete idleness, whose authority is founded either on a pretended elevation of birth, or on a cunning policy transmitted from father to son. These chiefs, generally the only inhabitants of the village who speak Spanish, have the greatest interest in keeping their fellow-citizens in the most profound ignorance, and they contribute the most to perpetuate prejudices, ignorance, and the ancient barbarity of manners.....The Indians and the castes are in the hands of the magistrates of districts (*justicias territoriales*), whose immorality has not a little contributed to their misery..... The *alcaldes mayores* administered justice with impartiality, whenever their own interests were not concerned; but the sub-delegates of the intendants, having no other revenues than casualties, deemed themselves authorised to employ illicit means to procure themselves a comfortable subsistence. Hence the perpetual oppression and the abuse of authority to which the poor were subject; and hence the indulgence towards

the rich, and the shameful traffic of justice. The intendants find the greatest difficulties in the choice of the sub-delegates, from whom the Indians can expect neither support nor protection. That support and protection they seek from the clergy, and hence the constant opposition in which the clergy and the sub-delegates live."

In the close of this important document, (which throws considerable light on the causes that led to the first Mexican revolution,) this venerable and patriotic prelate boldly declares, that unless a change were made in the system, the influence which the clergy possessed over the hearts of these unfortunate people, would not much longer be sufficient to hold them in loyal subjection to their sovereign.*

The Revolution has at least effected some of the changes recommended by the bishop to the government. The copper-coloured race are declared, together with all the castes, to be possessed of the same rights as the whites. The "odious personal impost" of the *tributo* is also abolished; but, as a matter of course, they will now be subject to the alcavala and other taxes from which they were exempt. "Measures," however, "must be taken," remarks the American citizen, "to educate the Indians, and lands must be distributed among them, before they can be considered as forming a part of the people of a free government."† This very measure the Bishop of Mechoacan urges: "Let a portion of the domains of the crown (*tierras realenguas*), which are generally uncultivated, be granted to the Indians and the castes; let an agrarian law be passed for Mexico, similar to that of the

* Humboldt, Pol. Essay, vol. i. pp. 190—196.
† Notes on Mexico, p. 120.

Asturias and Galicia, by which the poor cultivator is permitted to appropriate, under certain conditions, the land which the great proprietors have left uncultivated, to the detriment of the national industry." The other changes which the Bishop recommends, are, that liberty should be given alike to the Indians, the castes, and the whites, to settle in each other's villages, and that all judges and district magistrates should have fixed salaries. We know not how far the Federal Government has hitherto realised these wise suggestions; but there is room to hope that they will at least be eventually accomplished.

Previously to the Revolution, the Europeans (a word then held synonymous with Spaniard) are supposed to have constituted only a 70th part of the population, their proportion to the white Creoles being as one to fourteen. In the capital, according to an official census drawn up by the Count de Revillagigedo, in every hundred inhabitants, forty-nine were Spanish Creoles, two European Spaniards, twenty-four Aztec and Otomite Indians, and twenty-five of mixed blood. Of 1,200,000 whites, who were then reckoned to be included in the population of New Spain, Humboldt supposes that not more than 70 or 80,000 were Europeans. We have already referred to the pernicious policy which led to the bestowment of all employments on the natives of Old Spain. "The most miserable European," says Humboldt, "without education and without intellectual cultivation, thinks himself superior to the whites born in the new continent." Captain Hall states, that the Spaniards were absurdly unguarded in the terms they used in speaking of the natives. "They delighted to contrast their own *superior ilustracion* with the *ignorancia barbara* of the Mexicans; and if any one ventured to insinuate,

that this ignorance of the natives might, perhaps, have been produced by the manner in which the country had been governed,—they would turn fiercely on us, and maintain that they were incapable of being educated." "Much, however, in fairness," adds this intelligent traveller, "is to be said in excuse for the sinking race of Spaniards in these countries. They undoubtedly are far better informed men, more industrious, and more highly bred, than the natives are in general. As merchants, they are active, enterprising, and honourable in all their dealings. It is only on the national question between them and the natives, that they are illiberal. They are much less tainted with bigotry than the natives. They are men, taken generally, of pleasing conversation and manners, and habitually obliging; and when not pressed by immediate danger and difficulties, especially so to strangers. For, notwithstanding their habitual jealousy, their prejudices never interfered with their cordial hospitality, and even generosity, to all foreigners who treated them with frankness and confidence. A Don, it is well known, is the most stately of mortals, to those who treat him with hauteur or reserve; but to those who really confide in him, and treat him, not precisely in a familiar manner, but in what is termed *un modo vorriente*, he becomes as cordial and as open as any man." *

The castes are estimated by Humboldt as forming a total of nearly 2,400,000,—a proportion of the population almost as considerable as the Indians. The mestizoes, or *metis*, are by far the most numerous, being reckoned to form seven-eighths of the half-cast natives. Their colour is almost a pure white, with a

* Hall's Journal, vol. ii. pp. 269—271.

skin of remarkable transparency. The small beard, and small hands and feet, and a certain obliquity of the eyes, are more certain indications of the mixture of Indian blood, than the nature of the hair. If a *mestiza* marries a white man, the second generation differs hardly in any thing from the European race. The *metis* are generally accounted of a much milder character than the mulattoes, who are distinguished by the violence of their passions, their superior energy and activity, and their singular volubility. The offspring of a white man by a mulatto are termed *quarterons;* and the children of a female quarteron who marries a white, are *quinterons*. The children of a white by a female quinteron are considered as whites. The descendants of negroes and Indian women are known at Mexico, Lima, and the Havannah, by the absurd name of *Chino*, Chinese; the term *zambo*, which the laws apply to them, being mostly restricted to the descendants of a negro by a female mulatto, or a negro and female *Chino*. These *zambos* again are distinguished from the offspring of a negro and a female zambo, who are called *zambos prietos*, black zambos. The mixtures in which the colour of the children becomes deeper than that of the mother, are called *salta-atras*, back-steps.*

The greater or smaller degree of whiteness of skin, decides the rank of the individual in society. "A white who rides barefoot, thinks he belongs to the

* "The castes of Indian or African blood preserve the odour peculiar to the cutaneous transpiration of those two primitive races. The Peruvian Indians, who, in the middle of the night, distinguish the different races by their quick sense of smell, have formed three words to express the odour of the European, the Indian, and the negro, viz. *pezuna*, *posco*, and *grajo*."—HUMBOLDT'S *Pol. Essay*, vol. i. p. 245.

nobility of the country." When any one of the lower orders enters into a dispute with one of the titled lords of the country, it is no unusual thing to hear him say, Do you think me not so white as yourself? It not unfrequently occurs, that families suspected of mixed blood apply to the high court of justice for a certificate that they are white; and in this way, some very swarthy mulattoes have had the address to get themselves whitened. When the colour affords too palpable a contradiction of the declaration sought for, the petitioner is obliged to content himself with the somewhat problematical sentence, that such or such individuals may consider themselves as whites (*que se tengan por blancos*).*

Of all the European colonies under the torrid zone, Mexico is the country in which there are the fewest negroes. "One may go through the whole city of Mexico," says Humboldt, "without seeing a single black. In this point of view, Mexico presents a striking contrast to the Havannah, Lima, and the Caraccas. The negroes of Jamaica are, to those of New Spain, in the proportion of 250 to 1. According to the most authentic accounts it appeared, that in 1793, in all New Spain, there were not 6000 negroes, and, at the very utmost, 9 or 10,000 slaves, of whom the greater number belonged to the ports of Vera Cruz and Acapulco, or the *tierras calientes*." By the laws, there could be no Indian slaves in the Spanish colonies; and though these laws were notoriously evaded, the slaves were taken more under the protection of the government than the negroes in other European colonies, and every facility was given to their obtaining their manumission. To the honour

* See Modern Traveller. Brazil, vol. i. p. 91.

of the Federal Republic, slavery can no longer exist on the Mexican soil.

Among the various ranks or orders into which society is distributed, we have to notice, first, the titled nobility, who are all white Creoles, to whom it will be proper to restrict the term Mexicans. They are thus characterised by the American traveller: "Satisfied with the enjoyment of their large estates,* and with the consideration which their rank and wealth confer, they seek no other distinction; they are not remarkable for their attainments, or for the strictness of their morals. The lawyers," (it is added,) "who, in fact, exercise much more influence over the people, rank next to the nobles. They are the younger branches of noble houses, or the sons of Europeans, and are distinguished by shrewdness and intelligence. Next in importance are the merchants and shopkeepers; for the former are not sufficiently numerous to form a separate class: they are wealthy, and might possess influence, but have hitherto taken little part in the politics of the country, most probably from the fear of losing their property. The labouring class in the cities and towns, includes all castes and

* Humboldt mentions individuals, not possessing mines, whose revenues amounted to upwards of 40,000*l.* sterling. The three branches of the family of the Count de la Valenciana, possessed revenues to the amount of 90,000*l.*; but this was partly drawn from mines. The "superb estates" of the representative of the family of Cortes, in the intendency of Oaxaca, yield a net rent of 23,000*l.*; and, "if the descendants of the great *Conquistador* would but live at Mexico, their revenue would immediately rise to more than a million and a half of francs." (62,505*l.*) But these immense fortunes are in the hands of a small number of individuals. The inequality in the distribution of wealth is "terrific,"—the more so, because there exists no intermediate class. "We are rich or miserable," says the patriotic Bishop of Mechoacan, "noble or degraded."

colours; they are industrious and orderly, and view with interest what is passing around them; most of them can read, and in the large cities, papers and pamphlets are hawked about the street, and sold at a cheap rate. The labouring class in the country is composed, in the same manner, of different castes: they are sober, industrious, docile, ignorant, and superstitious, and may be led by their priests or masters to good or evil. Their apathy has in some measure been overcome by the long struggle for independence, in which most of them bore a part, but they are still under the influence and direction of the priests. The last class, unknown as such in a well regulated society, consists of beggars and idlers, drones that prey upon the community, and who, having nothing to lose, are always ready to swell the cry of popular ferment, or to lend their aid in favour of imperial tyranny. The influence of this class, where it is numerous, upon the fate of revolutions, has always been destructive to liberty." *

In this enumeration, however, it is strange that no specific notice is taken of the clergy, except as exerting a powerful influence over the labouring classes. "It may not be altogether correct," it is said, "to con-

* Notes on Mexico, pp. 120, 121. "The streets of Mexico swarm with from 20 to 30,000 wretches (*Saragates, Guachinangos*), of whom the greater number pass the night in the open air, and stretch themselves out to the sun during the day, with nothing but a flannel covering. These dregs of the people bear an analogy to the *lazzaroni* of Naples. Lazy, careless, and sober, like them, the *Guachinangos* have nothing, however, ferocious in their character, and they never ask alms; for, if they work one or two days in the week, they earn as much as will purchase their pulque, or some of the ducks with which the Mexican lakes are covered, which are roasted in their own fat."—HUMBOLDT. This was written in 1808. It is obvious, how dangerous would be such a class to the community at a period of political commotion.

sider their influence as confined exclusively to the upper and lower orders of society; but certainly, a very large proportion of the middle class are exempt from it. Unfortunately, too many who were educated in the forms of the Roman Catholic church, have emancipated themselves from its superstitions, only to become sceptics and infidels." The inequality of fortune which is found in the class of proprietors, is still more conspicuous among the clergy. "A number of them suffer extreme poverty, while others possess revenues which surpass those of many of the sovereign princes of Germany. The Mexican clergy are composed of only 10,000 individuals, half of whom are regulars who wear the cowl. If we include lay brothers and sisters, and all those who are not in orders, we may estimate them at 13 or 14,000. The annual revenues of the eight Mexican bishops,* amount to a sum-total of 118,000*l.*; but the income of the bishop of Sonora amounts only to the twentieth part of that of the bishops of Valladolid and Mechoacan; and, what is truly distressing, in the diocese of an archbishop whose revenue amounts to 27,000*l.*, there are clergymen of Indian villages whose income does not exceed from 20*l.* to 25*l.*"†

A more particular notice of the manners and costume of the diversified population will find its place in the topographical description. Having detained our readers already too long with the historical and geographical introduction, (which we have found it impossible, however, to compress within a narrower

* The Mexican hierarchy consists of the archbishop of Mexico, and the bishops of la Puebla, Valladolid, Guadalaxara, Durango, Monterey, Yucatan Oaxaca, and Sonora.

† Humboldt's Pol. Essay, vol. i. pp. 229—32.

compass,) we hasten to conduct them, by the shortest route, from the coast to the capital.

VERA CRUZ.

On approaching the harbour of Vera Cruz, the rugged mountains that skirt the Orizaba, with its snowy conical peak towering above them all, present a magnificent spectacle. The low lands are at length seen, finely undulating and rich in the deep verdure and luxuriant vegetation of the tropics. The city itself, with its red and white cupolas, towers, and battlements, and the strong castle of S. Juan de Ulua, which commands the port, has a splendid appearance from the water. But, says Mr. Bullock, "this painted Golgotha is the head-quarters of death." The little *Isla de Sacrificios*, the dread of navigators, between which and Point Mocambo, vessels, however, sometimes anchor, is strewed with the bones of British subjects who have perished in this unhealthy climate, and whose remains are not allowed to be buried in consecrated ground. The island was so named by Grijalva, who found here a temple in which a human victim had been sacrificed the day before his arrival.* It is now a mere heap of sand, with only one wretched Indian family residing on it; but there are vestiges of ruins.

The port of Vera Cruz† is the only one on this

* The island on which the fortress of S. Juan de Ulua is built, is said to owe its name to a similar circumstance. Grijalva, on finding there the remains of two unfortunate victims, inquired of the natives why they sacrificed men, and was told, it was by order of the kings of *Acolhua*. The Spaniards, who had Indians of Yucatan for interpreters, mistook the answer, and supposed Ulua to be the name of the island. — Humboldt's *Pol. Essay*, vol. ii. p. 215.

† Lat. 19° 11′ 52″ N.; long. 98° 29′ W. — Humboldt.

coast which can receive a man of war. It is easy of access, but very insecure, being open to the much dreaded northerly winds; while the holding-ground is so bad, that no vessel is deemed secure unless made fast to rings fixed for the purpose in the castle wall. The mole, or landing-place, is a low pier of solid masonry. "I had scarcely put my foot upon it," says Mr. Bullock, "when I observed that it was partially paved with pigs of iron, each bearing the broad arrow of the king of England, which, I afterwards learned, were part of the ballast of an English frigate, left in order to enable her to return with a larger quantity of specie. Thus, the first step an Englishman takes in New Spain, is upon what once was English property." The city is beautifully and regularly built, and the streets are so extremely neat and clean, that, on the first view of the interior, the traveller is at a loss to account for its extreme unhealthiness. But buzzards, and other birds of the vulture species, may be observed hovering over the town, and perching on the house-tops; a sure indication that animal putrefaction is going forward. Mr. Bullock (who visited Mexico in March 1823) thus describes the appearance of the city.

"Many of the houses of Vera Cruz are large, some three stories high, built in the old Spanish or Moorish style, and generally enclosing a square court, with covered galleries. They have flat roofs, glass windows, and are well adapted to the climate: most of them have balconies of wood in front, and the interior arrangement is the same as in Old Spain. The whole town, as well as the castle, is built of coral (the *madrepora meandrities*), and the lime that forms the cement is of the same material: it is used for the roofs and foot pavement, and is so hard, that in some places

it receives, from friction, a polish like marble. There is one tolerably good square, of which the government-house forms one side, and the principal church the other. The foot-paths are frequently under piazzas, a great accommodation to passengers, protecting them from the sultry heat of the sun, and the heavy rains, which descend in torrents in the wet season.

"Sixteen cupolas or domes are counted from the sea, but only six churches are now in use. Indeed, nearly all the churches, monasteries, and nunneries here, have been abandoned, and are fast falling into decay, since the place has been lost to the Spaniards. Nothing is more repulsive to strangers accustomed to the bustle of European cities, than the gloomy death-like appearance of the place. Of any other city it is considered a disgrace to say, that grass grows in the streets, but here it would be a compliment, for no vegetation* is to be observed even for miles around; and fish is the only article of provision not brought from a distance. The only water fit to drink, is what falls from the clouds, and is preserved in tanks; that from the castle and the convent of Franciscans being the best. Though the markets are tolerably well supplied by the Indians, living at the hotels is expensive and very uncomfortable. Provisions are dear, with the exception of fish, which, as already stated, is in abundance and good. Some beautiful and curious Mangrove oysters were the largest and finest flavoured I ever met with. Milk is scarcely to be had, as not a cow is kept within many miles, and what is, perhaps, peculiar to Vera Cruz, there is not a garden even near it. The absence of vegetation attests at once the poverty

* "On my arrival it was the dry season, but on my return I found some little verdure."

of the soil and the insalubrity of the climate. I know not whether prejudice may not have influenced my decision, but to me, Vera Cruz appears the most disagreeable place on earth; and its character of being the most unhealthy spot in the world, naturally makes the stranger shudder every hour he remains within its walls, surrounded by arid sands, extensive swamps, and savannahs, the exhalations from which are removed only by strong winds.

"Society here, as may be anticipated, is extremely confined, and morality at a very low ebb. Few of the European merchants whom the hopes of gain have allured to reside here, are married. One class of the occupants will excite some surprise in persons unacquainted with tropical regions; I mean the carrion vultures. They are as tame in the streets as domestic fowls; and, like the dogs from the mountains at Lisbon, act as the scavengers of the place, very speedily clearing away whatever filth may be left. Their senses of smell and sight are very acute. While I was preserving some fishes in an apartment at the top of the hotel, the surrounding roofs were crowded with anxious expectants; and when the offal was thrown out, it was with much contention greedily consumed. They are on good terms with the dogs, and the two animals may be frequently seen devouring the same carcase. They pass the night on the roofs of the churches, where I have sometimes observed several hundreds."

Humboldt, who was there in 1802, states the resident population, exclusive of the militia and seafaring people, at 16,000. The English traveller was informed by several individuals of whom he made inquiry, that it does not now contain above 7000 inhabitants, although it appeared to him as large as

many towns containing a population three times that number.* The city is sometimes called Vera Cruz *Nueva*, to distinguish it from Vera Cruz *Vieja*, situated near the mouth of the Rio Antigua, which has been erroneously supposed by the historians to be the site of Cortes's first settlement. The city begun in 1519, was at three leagues' distance from Zempoalla, near the small port of Chiahuitzla. Three years afterwards, Villa Rica was transferred to another spot, further south, which has preserved the name of *La Antigua*, and which was in its turn abandoned as unhealthy. The present town was founded by the viceroy, Count de Monterey, towards the end of the sixteenth century, in the very place where Cortes first landed. It received the title and privileges of a city from Philip III. in 1615. It is situated in an arid plain destitute of running water, on which the impetuous north winds have formed hills of moving sand, that change their form and situation every year. These *meganos* (as they are called) are from twenty-six to thirty feet in height, and contribute very much to increase the suffocating heat. They may be considered, Humboldt says, as so many ovens by which the ambient air is heated, and by surrounding the town on the S. and S.W., they prevent a free circulation of air. In the midst of these sandy downs, between the city and the *Aroyo Gavilan*, are marshy grounds covered with mangles and other brushwood. Water is found, on digging the sandy soil, at the depth of nine or ten feet; but it proceeds only from the filtration of the marshes, and is in fact rain water, which has been in contact with

* The circuit within the walls is in fact only 5,362,000 square feet; a very confined space for the population.

the roots of vegetables, and is of very bad quality. The want of good potable water has been for centuries looked upon as one of the numerous causes of the diseases of the inhabitants; and, in 1704, a project was formed for conveying the water of the fine river of Xamapa to Vera Cruz. A stone aqueduct was begun, but, after numerous disputes, reports, surveys, and an immense expenditure, it was discovered to have been planned in entire ignorance of the proper level, and was abandoned. The cisterns which collect the rain water, are, with the exception of those in the castle, very improperly constructed; and the lower people are obliged to have recourse to the water of a ditch. The stagnant water of the *Baxio de la Tembladera*, and the small lakes of *la Hormiga*, *el Rancho de la Hortiliza*, and *Arjona*, is said to occasion intermittent fevers among the natives, and is thought to be not the least important among the fatal causes of the *vomito prieto*. These low and marshy places, says Humboldt, are the more to be feared, as they are not constantly covered with water. A bed of dead leaves, mixed with fruits, roots, larvæ of aquatic insects, and other animal matter, enter into fermentation as they become heated by the rays of a burning sun. It deserves remark, however, that the seasons when the *vomito prieto* commits the greatest ravages, are, the beginning and the termination of the rainy season, particularly the months of September and October. The strong heats begin in the month of March, and the epidemical scourge begins at the same time. In general, it ceases to rage when, at the commencement of the north winds, the mean temperature of the months falls below 75° of Fahrenheit; that is, in December, January, and February, when a very

sensible cold is frequently felt; but in 1803, it prevailed in a milder form during the whole winter.*

* Humboldt has a very long and interesting dissertation on this subject, (Pol. Essay, book v. c. 12.) which the medical reader will do well to consult. We can only briefly advert to it. It is certain, he says, that the *vomito*, which is endemical at Vera Cruz, Carthagena, and the Havannah, is the same disease as the yellow fever. He considers it as a typhus *sui generis*, strictly endemic, and *not* contagious. It is remarkable, that it has never hitherto appeared on the western coast of New Spain, although at Acapulco, bilious fevers and the *cholera morbus* are very frequent and equally fatal, so that Acapulco is deemed one of the most unhealthy places in the new continent. For fifty years back, the *vomito* has never appeared on any point of the coast of the South Sea, with the exception of the town of Panama, which, like Vera Cruz, is situated on an arid tongue of land, destitute of vegetation, and the tide leaves exposed a great extent of ground covered with marine plants and gelatinous mollusci, the decomposition of which is supposed to originate the infection. Individuals born at Vera Cruz are not subject to this disease; and it is the same with the inhabitants of the Havannah who do not quit their country; but natives of Cuba are sometimes attacked with the *vomito* at Vera Cruz, and Mexicans born at Vera Cruz, have fallen victims to the disease at Havannah, Jamaica, or the United States. In general, however, the instances of West Indians being attacked with yellow fever, are as rare as of negroes falling victims to it. The whites and the mestizoes who inhabit the table-land, are still more liable to contract the *vomito* on descending to Vera Cruz, than Europeans who come by sea; and the mortality is particularly great among the muleteers and the recruits destined for the garrison. Two circumstances may contribute to this; the more sudden change of climate they undergo, and their previous exhaustion from fatigue. But even when the precaution has been taken, of leaving the soldiers for several weeks at Xalapa, to season them to a higher temperature, they have been attacked with not less violence. A few years before Humboldt's visit, of 350 Mexican soldiers, all between the ages of eighteen and twenty-five, 272 perished in the course of three months. When the disorder rages with great violence, merely journeying from Xalapa across the plain of Vera Cruz in a litter, during the cool of the night, to embark at the mole, has been known to prove fatal; and it is the same in ascending to Xalapa from the coast. Women run less risk than men; but a

The first symptoms of the *vomito* are, a pain in the lumbar region, and signs of congestion about the head. The disease sometimes does not declare itself before the traveller arrives at Xalapa, or on the mountains of *la Pileta*; and those who have long resided at Xalapa, deem themselves able to ascertain from the features of the individual, whether he has contracted the disease or not. Of this, Humboldt cites a curious instance. A friend of his had arrived there, after a very short stay at Vera Cruz, without feeling any indication of approaching indisposition. "You will have the *vomito* this evening," said an Indian barber gravely to him while he lathered his face; "the soap dries as fast as I put it on; that is a never-failing sign; and for twenty years that I have been in the practice of shaving the *chapetons* who pass through this town on their way to Mexico, three out of every five have died." This sentence of death made a strong impression on the spirits of the traveller. It was in vain to represent to the Indian that his calculation was exaggerated, and that a great heat in the skin does not prove the infection to have taken place; the barber persisted in his prognostic, and in fact, the disease manifested itself a few hours after-

person who has once been attacked with the disease, is in no danger from subsequent epidemics. It is a very remarkable fact, that, during the eight years that preceded 1794, there was not a single example of *vomito* at Vera Cruz, although the concourse of Europeans and Mexicans from the interior was unusually great, and although the town was not so clean as it has been since 1800; notwithstanding, too, that the yellow fever never ceased, during that period, to rage in the West Indies, and that several hundreds of vessels from those infected places annually arrived at Vera Cruz, without undergoing quarantine. The *vomito* re-appeared in 1794, with the arrival of three ships of war that had touched at Porto Rico: and between 1794 and 1804, it re-appeared every year when the north winds ceased to blow.

wards, and the traveller very nearly became the victim of its violence.*

In the environs of Vera Cruz, the *vomito* is only found to prevail to the distance of ten leagues from the coast. The Spanish Government at one time contemplated destroying the town, under the idea that the pestilence was strictly local in its origin, and it was proposed to shut up the port during the hot months. Its importance however, as the only port on the eastern coast that affords any shelter to men of war, together with the danger of the navigation in winter, not to speak of the destruction of property consequent on the measure, would render such a determination extremely unwise. Whatever be the causes of the insalubrity of Vera Cruz, were the marshes drained, the high walls which surround the town and impede the circulation thrown down, and proper means adopted to secure cleanliness and a supply of wholesome water, there can be little doubt that the evil would be considerably diminished.

The intendency of Vera Cruz extends along the Mexican Gulf, from the Rio Baraderas or de los Lagartos, to the great river of Panuco, which rises in the metalliferous mountains of San Luis Potosi, including a very considerable part of the eastern coast of New Spain. It is bounded, on the east, by the peninsula of Merida; on the west and south, by the intendencies of Oaxaca, Puebla, and Mexico; on the north, it extends to New Santander. Its length, from the Bay of Terminos, near the Island of Carmen, to the small port of Tampico, is 210 leagues, while its breadth is only from 25 to 28 leagues. Within this distance, however, are comprehended the most opposite climates,

* Humboldt's Pol. Essay, vol. iv. p. 178, *note*.

as the western part of the intendency is formed by the declivity of the Cordilleras. In the course of a day, the inhabitants descend from the regions of eternal snow to the burning coast. The admirable order in which the different vegetable tribes rise one above another, as it were by strata, is no where more perceptible than in ascending from the port of Vera Cruz to the table-land of Perote. The features of the country, the aspect of the sky, the forms of plants, the figures of animals, the manners of the inhabitants, and the kind of cultivation, assume a different character at every stage of our progress. "As we ascend, nature gradually appears less animated, the beauty of the vegetable forms diminishes, the stems become less succulent, the flowers of less vivid colours. The appearance of the Mexican oak quiets the alarms of travellers newly landed, by demonstrating that he has left behind the zone under which the *vomito* exercises its ravages. Thick forests of styrax and other balsam-trees,* near Xalapa, announce, by the freshness of their verdure, that this is the elevation at which the clouds come in contact with the basaltic summits of the Cordillera. A little higher, near *La Blanderilla*, the nutritive fruit of the banana no longer comes to maturity; and in this cold and foggy region, necessity spurs on the Indian to labour, and excites his industry. At the height of San Miguel, pines begin to mingle with the oaks, which are found by the traveller as high as the elevated plains of Perote, where he beholds the delightful aspect of fields sown with wheat. Between three and four thousand feet higher, the coldness of the climate will no longer admit of the vegetation of oaks; and pines alone there cover the rocks, the

* "Liquidambar styrax, piper longum, melastomata, and ferns resembling trees."

summits of which enter the zone of perpetual snow. Thus, in a few hours, the naturalist, in this wonderful country, ascends the whole scale of vegetation, from the heliconia and the banana plant, whose glossy leaves swell out into extraordinary dimensions, to the stunted foliage of the resinous trees."*

The *tierras calientes* might, under proper cultivation, form a very valuable part of the Mexican territory; but, though plantations have been of late years multiplying in the intendency of Vera Cruz, the coast presents, for the most part, the appearance of an unpeopled desert. Spaces of many square leagues are occupied by only two or three huts, round which roam herds of half-wild cattle. A small number of powerful families who reside on the table-land, are the proprietors of the greater part of the shores both of Vera Cruz and of San Luis Potosi; and in their hands, these immense territories are so neglected, that, in a country of the greatest fertility, there is found a want of hands, together with a scarcity of provisions. Wages are three times as high as on the table-land.

Within the limits of this intendency are the two colossal peaks already referred to; that of Orizaba, which, next to the Popocatepetl, is the highest in Mexico, and the *Coffre de Perote*, which is 1300 feet higher than the peak of Teneriffe. Four leagues S.E.

* Humboldt, Pol. Essay, vol. ii. p. 204. Among the precious productions of the burning plains are, the odoriferous *epidendrum vanilla*, which is found in the ever-green forests of Papantla, Nautla, and Tuxtla; the beautiful *convolvulus jalapa*, found near the Indian villages of Colipa and Misantla; the *myrtus pimenta*, which yields the spice called *pimienta de Tabasco*, and is found in the eastern part of the intendency, in the forests extending to the river of Baraderas; the *similax*, the root of which is the true salsaparilla; tobacco of an excellent quality; cotton of remarkable fineness and whiteness; and the cane yields nearly as much sugar as in Cuba.

of the port of Vera Cruz, near the Indian village of Santiago de Tuxtla, is the small volcano of Tuxtla, joining the *Sierra de San Martin*. A considerable eruption took place in March 1793, which covered with ashes the roofs of the houses at Oaxaca, Vera Cruz, and Perote. At the latter place, distant 57 leagues in a straight line, the subterraneous noises resembled heavy discharges of artillery.

In the northern part of the intendency, at two leagues' distance from the large village of Papantla, there is a remarkable pyramid, which was first discovered about sixty years ago. It is situated in the midst of a thick forest, called *Tajin*, which concealed it from the first conquerors. It differs from the pyramids of Cholula and Teotihuacan, in being constructed, not of bricks or clay, but wholly of immense blocks of stone, very regularly cut, and laid with mortar. The base is an exact square, each side being 80 feet in length. The perpendicular height is not quite 60 feet, and the edifice is less remarkable for its size, than its symmetry. Like all the Mexican *teocallis*, it is composed of several stages, six of which are still distinguishable: a seventh is concealed by the vegetation with which the sides of the pyramid are covered. Three flights of fifty-seven steps lead to the truncated summit, where the human victims were immolated. The facing is adorned with hieroglyphics, in which serpents and crocodiles in relief are discernible. A number of square niches (378) are symmetrically distributed over the pyramid, which have been conjectured to bear a correspondence to the Mexican calendar.† This remarkable monument will not fail to attract the attention of future travellers.

† Humboldt, Pol. Essay, vol. ii. pp. 211—14. Researches, vol. i. p. 86.

There are no mines of any importance in this intendency: those of Zomelahuacan, near Jalacingo, were almost abandoned in 1802. The other towns are, Xalapa, Perote, Cordoba, Orizaba, Tlacotlalpan, Villa Hermosa, and Victoria: the last of these is one of the oldest in New Spain. Xalapa occurs in the route

FROM VERA CRUZ TO MEXICO.

In a direct line from the coast, the level sandy country does not extend beyond three miles; but the road to Xalapa runs along the coast in a southerly direction as far as the assemblage of huts called the village of Santa Fe, a distance of two hours and a half. For nearly the whole of this way, there is neither road, nor habitation, nor any signs of living nature; the only marks of its having been traversed, are the skeletons of horses and mules which meet the eye of the traveller, as he is slowly dragged along in a *volante*,—a species of cabriolet, suspended by twisted leather thongs, and drawn by mules, which is the usual conveyance. Mr. Bullock, with whom we now join company, states, that he left the coast at a place called *Vera Agua*, where there is a stream with a bridge over it. At Santa Fe, he shot several birds, among which was the crested meadow-lark of America, a large and fine bird for the table, and exceedingly tame. Birds and hares of a diminutive size became very numerous, and the country began to be improved by vegetation, as he approached San Rafael. Here, he had the first specimen of a Mexican inn (*posada*), which, though not much inferior to a Brazilian *rancho*, was feelingly contrasted by our naturalist, with an English barn or hay-loft; either of which, he says, would have been Paradise to it. The *posada* is "a

large shed, thatched with leaves or reeds, partly enclosed like a bird-cage, and freely admitting the air; so little barricadoed as to allow whatever passes within to be seen without; and with the roof projecting very considerably over the sides." Having with difficulty procured some planks on which to place their mattresses, the travellers prepared to go to sleep; but, alas! the noise of numberless dogs barking, mules kicking and fighting, and muleteers cursing, the suffocating heat, the singing and stinging of mosquitoes, and the presence of myriads of fleas, rendered slumber impossible. A better road, carried at considerable expense over otherwise impassable morasses, conducts to *Passo de Ovejas.* This is part of the magnificent road from Perote to Vera Cruz, mentioned by Humboldt as undertaken by order of the *consulado*, which, he says, promises to rival those of the Simplon and Mount Cenis; and had it been carried to an end in the same manner in which it was begun, it would not, Mr. Bullock says, have been surpassed by either. But, after immense sums had been expended, the project was abandoned, and it is now a ruin.* At Passo de Ovejas, there is an unfinished mansion of considerable size and of some architectural beauty, commenced by the proprietor of the estate before the revolution, but that event put a stop to the building. The land in the neighbourhood appears rich, and is cultivated with the cane, beans, and maize. In this day's journey, Mr. Bullock observed many different species of vultures, hawks, orioles, crows, cuckoos,

* "Should the English establish a communication with the mines of Mexico," says Mr. Bullock, "this road will be of the greatest importance. Little is wanting towards its completion, as the most difficult part has already been performed, and materials are abundant."

and the Virginia nightingale. After leaving Passo de Ovejas, a very indifferent road leads through a wretched, barren tract, overgrown with low *mimosas*, till, at the end of two leagues, it winds down a steep hill to the banks of the river Antigua, which it passes by an extensive and well-constructed causeway, and a magnificent bridge with stone arches, called *Puente del Rey** (King's bridge). This bridge is constructed immediately below the junction of two fine streams, which fall with great rapidity and broken water over the rocks, and are separated by a lofty and abrupt head-land. The banks of the river are precipitous and rocky, but ornamented with a profusion of flowering shrubs, that rise up through the fissures in the rocks. The high, rocky "promontory" is crowned and flanked with cannon; and some importance is attached to it as a military post. At the time of Mr. Bullock's visit, it was occupied by the republican troops under Generals Victoria and Santana.† In front of the bridge, and on each side of the road, stands a village of small huts, with a church of the same rude construction at a little distance. These habitations are constructed by driving small stakes into the ground as close together as practicable, leaving them eight feet high. They are bound together by two slips of cane, or laths, placed horizontally, one about four feet from the ground, the other directly under the roof. The frame of the roof is formed of long bam-

* In the short reign of Iturbidé, its name was changed to *Puente Imperial;* but when Mr. B. was there, it had recovered its ancient name.

† The author of "Notes on Mexico," represents it to be a very bad military position, as it can easily be cut off from wood, water, and supplies. It had once before been occupied by Victoria, but he was obliged to abandon it on the approach of the royalists.

boes, canes, and small sticks; and the shape it assumes, depends upon the length and quality of the materials. They contrive to give it a high pitch, and thatch it with palm-leaves, which turn off water in a remarkable manner. "I have often," says the American traveller, "when in Chili, seen the light glimmering through a thatch of palm-leaves, while the rain was falling in torrents, and never observed the smallest leak in the roof." The areas before the doors of these huts are swept with great care, and are sometimes shaded by a treillage covered with vines; and on the Sunday, the inhabitants may be seen sitting at their doors, in their coarse, but neat, white dresses, forming a pleasing and picturesque scene. The traveller leaves this village by a part of the new road, which is in perfect preservation wherever the country is level: it is covered with a strong lime cement. Thick woods of mimosa obstruct the view on either side, bearing, besides their own flowers, an infinite variety of parasitical plants of the most brilliant hues. Having started at day-light, Mr. Bullock reached, at two o'clock, *Puente del Reyna*, where, on the banks of the river, is another respectable village. The next day he reached Xalapa, having occupied four long days in a journey which, he remarks, an English stage-coach, on English roads, could have performed in seven or eight hours. But, alas! there are no English stage-coaches in the new world. As this traveller fails us here, with regard to the places between Puente del Rey and Xalapa, we must avail ourselves of the notes of the American citizen.

About three hours' distance from Puente del Rey is the ravine of *Plan del Rio*, where the road passes over a fine paved causeway, a part of the new road

commenced in 1804. There is a large village, and a handsome bridge has been thrown over the broad and rapid, but very shallow stream. "The people here," says this traveller, "wear the same appearance of cleanliness and contentment that I remarked at Puente del Rey." A wretched country and a bad road extend for the next two or three hours. Not quite six leagues from Plan del Rio, is the village of Encero. Here there is a large building, formerly a *venta*, or inn, which in the revolutionary war was converted into a fortress, and appears to have sustained a siege, for it is all in ruins. The traveller has now reached the region of oaks, and begins to breathe a purer air; he may, therefore, safely rest at this place, and the next day's journey is an arduous one. For an hour and a half he has to travel over the most rugged of roads, up a continued ascent. In front is seen a bold, craggy mountain, surmounted by the singular coffer-shaped rock which gives name to it; and on the left, the snowy cone of Orizaba, of dazzling whiteness, is seen towering above the dark hills that skirt its base. A great coat is now indispensable. After ascending for two hours, he enters again on a paved road, through a cultivated country, chiefly fields of maize; and soon the white walls and towers of Xalapa are discovered, in fine contrast with the deep verdure of the adjacent hills, and with a magnificent back-ground of dark and rugged mountains. "We enjoyed this view for some time," says our American, "and entered the town by the street of the Pure Blood of Christ. To our Protestant ears, these names sound very profanely: not so in Roman Catholic countries."

Xalapa is very romantically situated at the foot of the basaltic mountain of Macultepec. It is neither so

clean nor so well built as Vera Cruz, but the situation is described as "enchanting." From the convent of St. Francis, which, like all those founded by Cortes, partakes of the character of a fortress, there is a magnificent view of the declivity of the Cordillera towards Encero, the river Antigua below, and even of the ocean. The elevation of this town is 4264 feet above the level of the sea. The sky here is beautiful and serene in summer; but, when the north wind blows at Vera Cruz, the inhabitants of Xalapa are enveloped in a thick fog, and the sun and stars are frequently invisible for two or three weeks together. The thermometer then descends to near 60° Fahrenheit; and from the month of December to the month of March, Humboldt states, the heavens wear a most melancholy aspect. On the other hand, while the coast is rendered almost uninhabitable by the mosquitoes, the burning heat, and the yellow fever, the rich merchants of Vera Cruz here enjoy, in their country-houses, a cool and agreeable retreat. The thick forests of styrax and arborescent ferns, the banks of the small lake *de los Berrios*, and the heights leading to the village of Huastepec, offer the most delightful promenades. The town contains many houses of two stories, built, after the old Spanish manner, in a square, and enclosing a court planted with trees and flowers, with a fountain in the centre. The roofs are tiled, not flat as in Vera Cruz, but projecting over the sides, for the purpose of sheltering the house from the sun and rain. Many of the houses have glass windows. There are eight churches, in an impure style of architecture, but they are kept clean, and the interiors are highly decorated with carving, gilding, and painting. The high altar of the cathedral is of silver, and the walls are covered with gilt orna-

ments. At the period of Mr. Bullock's visit, all the convents and religious houses were closed, except one. It was Lent, and he met a religious procession carrying a figure of Christ bearing his cross. "The streets through which it passed, had been swept, watered, and strewed with orange-leaves and flowers; and many of the houses had small crosses, decorated with flowers and drapery, placed over the doors. The shops and warehouses do not make a very showy appearance, as nothing is exposed in the windows. The barbers' shops, however, form an exception; they are very numerous, and have a respectable exterior. Mambrino's helmet is sported as a sign over their doors." *

The population of Xalapa is estimated at 13,000. The inhabitants have the character of being very courteous and hospitable to strangers. Mr. Bullock found them extremely ill-informed. "They believe the continent of Europe to be under the dominion of Spain; that England, France, Italy, Holland, and Germany, are so many paltry states to which the King of Spain appoints governors. Of the wars in Europe, they know as little as of its general state. The name of Wellington seemed scarcely known, although they had heard of the buccaneers, and spoke of our illustrious Drake and Sir Walter Raleigh as pirates." Some prints of the public buildings of London excited their astonishment; and when informed of the purposes for which they had been built, they exclaimed in

* Xalapa, Mr. Bullock says, "is justly celebrated for the excellency of its *washing*. Many of the inhabitants of Vera Cruz send hither to have their washing done!!" A fountain of the purest water supplies a public wash-house, called *Techacupa*, in which 144 persons can be employed at the same time. The operation is performed with *cold* water and soap.

astonishment, "And yet these people are not Christians! What a pity they are not Christians!" This Traveller carried out a volume of Ackermann's Fashions, which he left behind him at Xalapa. On his return from Mexico, six months afterwards, he had the satisfaction of finding that this volume had wrought wonders. The ladies, instead of appearing universally in black, were now to be seen in the last fashions of England, in white muslins, printed calicoes, and other manufactures of Manchester and Glasgow; and the public promenade presented an appearance of gayety hitherto unknown. The arrival of an English lady in the interior, whose newly-imported wardrobe had made the tour of the city, is admitted, however, to have contributed, in some measure, to this transformation; and it may be thought, that the speculations of our British merchants and manufacturers must have had a share in effecting it,—in connexion, we suspect, with a reduction of the previously exorbitant prices of all European manufactures. Mr. Bullock describes the ladies of Xalapa as gay, sprightly, and affable, living, apparently, on excellent terms with each other. Lively chat, music, and dancing, filled up the many pleasant evenings he passed here in several respectable families, till cards were produced, the conclusion of all Spanish parties, on which smiles and jests gave place before the demons of avarice and discord.

Mr. Bullock left Xalapa in a carriage; the American Traveller, in a litter; * their rate of travelling was,

* "A *litera* is a case six feet long and three wide, with three upright poles fixed on each side, to support a top and curtains of cotton cloth. The case is carried by means of long poles passing through leather straps, which are suspended from the saddle of the mules in the same manner as a sedan-chair is borne by porters. A mattress is spread at the bottom of the case, on which the traveller

therefore, very different. The former reached Puebla the second day. Following the journal of the latter, at two hours from Xalapa, passing through a fine country, is a small village called *La Cruz de la Cuesta.* From this place to the village of *Hoja*, the ascent is exceedingly steep, and the scenery most romantic and beautifully diversified. Below is a cultivated valley, bearing all the tropical fruits, and studded with a number of conical hills, wooded to their summits. On the opposite side, the valley is shut in by a lofty, perpendicular wall of bare rock, from the edge of which, and along the summit, extends a vast plain, cultivated with wheat and barley, and all the fruits of Europe. On the plain, and near the edge of the mountain, stands the town of Maulinjo, with its white walls and spires glittering in the sun; and the river that flows along the plain at the summit, passes near the town, and falls dashing and sparkling over the precipice into the valley. The whole is seen distinctly, but is sufficiently distant to be taken into one view. Among the trees of this region, which are constantly varying, the nopal, or prickly pear, grows to the height of twenty-four feet. From the village of Hoja, which consists of mud-huts, the whole scene changes, and the traveller enters on the region of pines. Leaving now the paved road, he begins to ascend by a narrow path that winds gradually up between two hills deeply wooded with pines, interspersed with viburnum and a great variety of flowering shrubs. The pine here, though not so lofty a tree as in North America, is very beautiful, with long, pendent leaves, its top terminating in a cone. A few short-leaved pines are scattered

reclines. It is a very luxurious mode of passing mountains, unless the mules prove unruly, for then the litter is tossed about in a strange manner."—*Notes on Mexico*, p. 29.

among the others. On emerging from this woody defile, the scene again changes, and presents a tract of country covered with lava. Viewed from a distance, it resembles land newly ploughed. Here and there are to be seen a few *yuccas* and small aloes; and in some spots, low pines and small shrubs rear their heads through chasms in the lava. This singular scene is thus described by Mr. Bullock: "The whole country for leagues was an entire mass of cinder, scoria, lava, and pumice, piled up in every form that can be conceived, and still remaining in the same state as when first left by some dreadful explosion of an unknown volcano: in some places, huge pinnacles threatening to fall and crush the passing traveller; in others, the liquid lava seems to have burst like an immense bubble, leaving arches of solid crust, from sixty to eighty feet high, and three or four thick, all hollow underneath, and spread at the bottom with loose cinders. This valley is bounded on the left by a ridge or wall of immense height, as if the great flood of melted matter had been chilled and stopped in its course. In some parts, it seemed as if the lava and scoria had been in part decomposed; and in these, several species of aloes, yucca, dracinæ, and other strange and picturesque plants, were thriving luxuriantly. In other places, thousands of trunks of huge trees, dead and crumbling into dust, added wildness to the scene of desolation. Still further on the left, the mountain of Pines, of extraordinary size, and others covered with stunted oaks, served by contrast to exhibit the picture of this tremendous-looking and savage region with greater force. After travelling about four miles over this bed of eruptive matter, which was constantly varying in its features, we came suddenly upon a clayey and sandy soil, and soon after,

to the Indian village of Los Vegos, built with planks and logs of wood, and covered with shingles, in the same manner as the mountain villages of Norway and the Alps."

Here the American Traveller halted for the night. On setting out the next morning before sunrise, he found the cold intense. Vegetation now seems again to decline, and the fine prospect is lost, till, on reaching the elevation of the table-land, the town and castle of Perote are soon seen in the midst of an extensive plain, partially cultivated, and covered with pumice-stones. "As we advanced," says the writer, "the view became very fine. Before us was the mountain of Pizarra (slate), insulated in the midst of the plain, and presenting a vast mass of rock, terminating in a lofty cone; on the left, in the distance, stood the volcanoes covered with snow, and, in front of them, a long line of bold, craggy mountains. The atmosphere was very clear, and every object distinctly defined. The foreground of the landscape was strikingly contrasted with the mountain scenery. It was made up of the town of Perote, with its white towers and the castle (of San Carlos), a regular fortification of four bastions, in good preservation; of fields clothed with the richest verdure, and covered with cattle; lands newly ploughed, with ploughmen driving 'their team a-field,' and all the soft and pleasing beauties of nature." The team consists, however, of either one mule or two, driven by a boy. The plough is of a simple construction, resembling the "shovel-plough" used in the United States. Near Perote are seen the first large plantations of the American aloe or *maguey*, from which is made the favourite Mexican beverage called *pulque*.

Perote (the ancient Pinahuizapan) is 7719 feet

above the level of the sea, just under the mountains. The town is small, the streets narrow, and the houses of only one floor, but many of them are large and commodious, with court-yards in the interior. They are built of stone, and, from the mode in which they are constructed, have more the appearance of a prison than of a dwelling-house; scarcely a window or chimney is to be seen. There is an extensive *mesón* or *posada* (inn or lodging-house), but the only articles of furniture visible are benches to sleep on, and a huge deal table, that seems coeval with the building, with its feet fast rammed into the earth floor at an inconvenient distance from the benches, which are fixed in the same manner. The walls have once been white, but whether the table was ever washed, is questionable. "We procured a candle," says Mr. Bullock, "but the luxury of a candlestick was out of the question: a hole in the table, round which grease had accumulated, pointed out the means of remedying the deficiency." To the traveller who is imprudent enough to have brought no provisions, *tortillas* with *frijoles* (beans, or what the Americans call "red cow peas") are likely to be the only breakfast or supper. Near the inn is a fine fountain of excellent water under the protection of a statue of the angel Gabriel; and at a little distance grow some very fine nopals, twenty-four feet in diameter, with leaves perfectly smooth and round, and eighteen inches across.

After leaving Perote, the road for three hours passes over the level plain, which has the appearance of being well cultivated, to the foot of Mount Pizarra. "As we wound round the base of this mountain," says the Traveller we are following, "we thought that we saw an extensive lake on the left of the road about three miles off. Although prepared to meet with the

miraye on this plain, and although I had seen this singular phenomenon in Asia, it was a long time before I could be convinced that what I saw was an optical delusion. My companion was most positive that it must be a large sheet of water, and was very much surprised, as we approached, to see the lake converted into an extensive tract of loose, sandy soil, over which the rays of light appeared to tremble and undulate through an extremely rarefied atmosphere. The base of Mount Pizarra, round which we continued to wind by a gentle ascent, is composed of lava, almost entirely concealed by the nopal, or broad-leaved *cactus*, which bounded the view on both sides of the road. It was melancholy to leave the magnificent view of the volcanoes, and mountains, and cultivated fields, and to plunge at once into this gloomy scene. In the midst of this desolation, we entered Tepe Agualco, a miserable village of mud-houses; the only appearance of cultivation near it, a few plants of the *maguey*." Here the travellers passed the second night, tormented by swarms of fleas. Setting out the next morning at seven o'clock, they passed over a dreary, barren plain until one, when they reached *Ojo de Agua*, seven leagues from Tepe Agualco. The warm spring which gives name to this town, gushes out from the foot of a hill. At its source, it is about four feet wide, and very shallow; but, at a very short distance, it becomes a large stream, a foot deep, and full fifty feet wide. The water continues to rise and bubble up from the earth for a great distance from its source. After keeping its course across the plains, the stream is said to lose itself in the mountains near Orizaba. When Mr. Bullock arrived here, the abundance of birds in this part, he says, was prodigious, consisting chiefly of the black and red oriole, on their

northern migration; and where the stream "spreads itself into a marsh," it was "covered by flocks of aquatic birds, ducks, herons, and snipes, which are seldom disturbed by the inhabitants." Towards the end of the desert, on approaching Ojo de Agua, where vegetation begins to re-appear, he observed a number of the trees that produce the gum-dragon, various aloes, and, in one place, a row of cypress trees. Beyond that town, the barren waste re-commences, and extends, with little interruption, to Nopaluca, a distance of two hours. Within the last half hour only of the journey, the lands appear of a better quality, but cultivated in a very slovenly manner.

Nopaluca is a small town pleasantly situated on a ridge of land, the valleys on either side of which are tolerably well cultivated with wheat, maize, and the agave. The houses are of one floor, built of *tapia* (rammed earth), or what the French call *pisé*, and there is a pretty church, built in a good style. Here the travellers were fortunate enough to find accommodation (the third night) in a *mesón* where the room was paved with tiles, the table was moveable, and the *huespede* (host) was actually induced to provide his guests with a chair. In this day's journey, the travellers noticed several flocks of wild ducks, some snipes, and, at a great distance, the mock-bird, which is to be seen, hung up in cages, in almost all the towns on the road.* At Nopaluca, they exchanged their litter for a coach which was returning from Vera

* "This delightful singing-bird," says the American Traveller, "inhabits both South and North America, and is found from Virginia to Chili, where I have frequently seen them, and where, during my long absence from the United States, their note acted on me like the *Ranz des Vaches* on the Swiss, reminding me painfully of home."

Cruz to Mexico,† and by this means, travelling at the very rapid rate of five miles an hour, they were enabled to reach Puebla in seven hours. The greater part of this day's route lies over bad roads, such as no English carriage, Mr. Bullock says, would venture on; and the barren country is notoriously infested with banditti. The road, soon after leaving Nopaluca, is cut through white sand-hills; it then enters a narrow defile which winds round the base of a hill wooded to the summit with pines and firs, and having on the other side a thick forest of pines and oaks. This part of the road, called the *Pinal*, is reckoned the most dangerous passage in the mountains. On emerging from the forest, the traveller descends to the bed of a mountain torrent, along which his road continues for some way, winding among low, barren hills, till at length he enters on an extensive and elevated plain, where the volcanoes of Puebla burst on his view. Among them, the stupendous cone of the Popocatepetl, the loftiest mountain in North America, is seen towering 11,156 feet above the plain, and the snowy mountain of Iztaccihuatl, of a broken and irregular form, seems to present an almost equal elevation. The plain itself is 6,560 feet above the sea; it is sandy, and strewed with large masses and loose stones of porphyry. A few pines and oaks are scattered by the road side, and here and there, a large *hacienda* occurs, with some signs of cultivation. The

* "These are clumsy vehicles, but strong and safe. The carriage of the one we hired, measured twelve feet from axle to axle, and the body is capable of containing six persons. Our trunks and mattresses were piled on before and behind the carriage, which is drawn by ten mules; two next the wheels, with a postillion who drives five more in front, while another postillion conducts the three leaders."—*Notes on Mexico*, p. 36.

road leads through the small town of Acaxete, and, within three leagues of Puebla, another neat and well-built town, called Omosoque. From hence, the country wears a more populous and cultivated appearance, and the approach to the capital of the intendency is indicated by the bustle and traffic which always distinguish the avenues to a large city. The road becomes wider, and the country people, a swarthy race, may be seen in great numbers, carrying their packs on their backs, fixed on by a band across the forehead, or driving before them troops of asses with packs and panniers. Mr. Bullock, who entered Puebla on the eve of Palm Sunday, met several groupes of Indians in their holiday dresses, provided with candles, fire-works, artificial flowers, shrubs, and other articles, in preparation for the approaching festival of Easter.

PUEBLA.

PUEBLA, or, to give its full title, *La Puebla de los Angeles*, is reckoned, next to Mexico, Guanaxuato, and the Havannah, the most considerable city in Spanish America, being more populous, according to Humboldt, than Lima, Quito, Santa Fe, or Caraccas. Its population, in 1803, was estimated at 67,800;* and although it appears to have declined since then, it still amounts, according to a census taken in 1820, to 60,000.† It is one of the very few towns founded by the Europeans; for, in the plain of Acaxete or Cuitlaxcoapan, on the spot where the capital now stands, there were, in the beginning of the sixteenth century, only a few huts inhabited by Indians of

* A twelfth part of the whole population of the intendency.

† Mr. Bullock says 90,000; but this we presume to be a mistake.

Cholula. It was created a town in Sept. 1531. "The site," says the American Traveller, "does credit to the taste and judgement of its founders. It is built on the south side of a hill that is wooded to its summit. The surrounding plain is cultivated with wheat, barley, Indian corn,* and all the fruits of Europe, and is highly productive. This plain is surrounded by a chain of hills, presenting alternately cultivated fields and luxuriant forests; and the view is terminated by the volcanoes of Puebla clothed in perpetual snows." The city is compactly and uniformly built. The streets, though not very wide, are straight, intersecting each other at right angles, and are very ornamentally paved with large stones in a diamond-shaped pattern; there are broad foot-paths on each side, which are kept remarkably clean. The houses are all of stone, spacious and commodious, generally of two stories, with flat roofs. The fronts of many of them are inlaid with painted tiles, highly glazed like the Dutch tile, some forming pictures, and having the appearance of rich mosaic. Others have their fronts gaudily and fantastically painted in fresco, similar to the houses of Genoa. The bishop's palace is covered over in this way with red tiles. Most of them have iron balconies in front, very elegantly constructed. Every house has, for the most part, a square court in the centre, with open galleries running round it, the balustrades of which are covered with porcelain pots of flowering plants, producing a most pleasing effect. The apartments are spacious and lofty, with plastered walls painted in distemper; the floors tiled, much like those of France, and uncovered: carpets are not in

* In Puebla, a considerable proportion of wheaten bread is consumed. The consumption in 1802, amounted to 52,951 *cargas* (300lbs. each) of wheaten flour, and only 36,000 *cargas* of maize.

use, nor are they necessary in this fine climate. Almost every sitting-room has a wax model of the Saviour, or of some saint, or the picture of the Virgin of Guadaloupe, or of a Magdalen, or the Crucifixion; the frames are often of silver. Most of the residences have a fountain of fine water, which is conveyed in earthen pipes,—a great luxury in the warm season. The family of the proprietor usually reside in the upper story, the ground-floor being occupied with shops, warehouses, or offices, and the first story by servants.

But it is in the splendour of its churches and other religious edifices, and in the richness of their endowments, that Puebla, according to Mr. Bullock, claims to take the first rank among the cities of the Christian world. It contains no fewer than sixty-nine churches, nine monasteries, thirteen nunneries, and twenty-three colleges; "the most sumptuous," says this Traveller, "that I have ever seen. Those of Milan, Genoa, and Rome, are built in better taste; but, in expensive interior decorations, the quantity and value of the ornaments of the altar, and the richness of the vestments, they are far surpassed by the churches of Puebla and Mexico." The cathedral forms one side of the great square; on the opposite side stands the *cabildo*, or town-hall; and the sides are occupied with shops under arcades, the whole gaudily painted. The exterior of the cathedral has nothing about it very ornamental or remarkable, but its interior furniture is rich beyond description. The high altar is strikingly splendid. Mr. Bullock describes it as a most superb sanctuary of exquisite workmanship, and states, that it had been but lately finished by an Italian artist, from Roman designs, but executed in Mexico, and of native materials. It occupies a considerable part of the cathe-

dral, and reaches into the dome. "The platform, which is raised some feet above the level of the rest of the church, is inlaid with marble of different colours. The interior of it is appropriated as a cemetery of the bishops of Puebla. The walls are of black and white marble, and the whole is vaulted with an elliptic arch. The canopy which rests on this platform, is supported by eight double marble columns, the effect of which is destroyed by brass ornaments and gilded capitals. The ceiling of the canopy is highly ornamented with stucco and gold. The *custodia* is of variegated marble; the front of embossed silver, and so constructed as to slide down and display the Host to the congregation. The *custodia* itself is surmounted by five bronze figures. In front of this altar is suspended an enormous lamp of massive gold and silver very beautifully wrought. The pulpit near it is cut out of a mass of carbonate of lime, which is found near Puebla; it receives a high polish, and is semi-transparent.* A row of lofty columns supporting the arches, runs round the whole interior of the building. The sanctuaries are numerous, and are ornamented with a profusion of gilding and some bad paintings. In the midst of this splendour, miserable, half-naked Indians were wandering about, or kneeling at the shrine of some favourite saint, forming a singular and painful contrast to the magnificence of the temple."†

The great fault of the high altar, Mr. Bullock says, is, that it is too large, disproportionate to the building

* Mr. Bullock states, that the windows of several of the churches and monasteries are formed of a single slab of this "hard, transparent alabaster, which admits a mild, pure light." The baptismal fonts and other sacred vessels are also composed of this stone. It is found a few leagues from the city.

† Notes on Mexico, p. 39.

in which it is placed, and too modern, also, to harmonise with the rest of the edifice, which is by no means worthy of it in point of architecture. The side altars, too, are all crowded to excess with statues, carving, gilding, silver candelabras, and other finery. He was fortunate enough to witness the celebration of the service of *Tenebræ*, when the whole cathedral, with its fretted golden roof and costly appendages, were displayed and illuminated by thousands of wax-lights, reflected from gold and silver chandeliers, and an altar covered with massive plate as fresh as from the hands of the artisan: at the same time, a host of officiating priests, arrayed in the richest vestments, together with the waving of banners, and solemn music performed by a powerful and well-conducted band, heightened the magnificent effect of the pageant; so that, Mr. Bullock says, "he who would wish to see the pomp of religious ceremony, should visit Puebla." Perfectly to enjoy the spectacle, however, he ought not to be a *Protestant*.

The bishop's palace contains a tolerable library. The room is 200 feet long by 45 wide, and is "well-furnished with books, mostly in vellum bindings." They are chiefly Spanish, with a few in French, and *one*, Mr. Bullock says, in English; but he gives no fuller account of it, than that it is "the life of one of our kings." A Bible in Spanish, with plates, was exhibited as "a *great curiosity*." One part of the library consists of controversial divinity, but the perusal of this portion is prohibited even to the clergy. There is also a very good collection of pictures in this palace.

Among the other religious edifices visited by the English Traveller, he enumerates the church of San Felipe Neri, one of the largest buildings in the city,

with the magnificent *hospicio* attached to it, which contains some "excellent paintings," and is "furnished with solid silver and gold crucifixes;" the church of La Santo Spiritu, formerly belonging to the Jesuits' College, a large building in good architectural taste; the church and monastery of St. Augustine, "one of the first class, with a square, high-raised altar of silver, ornamented with marble statues as large as life, and the sacristy superbly decorated;" and the church and monastery of St. Dominick, which have also their silver altar, and "near the rails are two dogs of the same metal, the size of life, on pedestals of gold and silver." The dome of this church is covered with painted and gilt tiles. The little church of the convent of St. Monica deserves also to be mentioned, we are told, for the richness of its vaulted roof, and walls encrusted with elaborate carvings; it also contains a few pictures, statues, and silver ornaments.

Puebla is governed by four *alcaldes*, and sixteen subordinate magistrates. The police, Mr. Bullock says, seems to be well regulated. That many of the inhabitants are wealthy, is attested by their equipages and retinues. "Handsome carriages, drawn by mules richly caparisoned, and attended by servants in showy liveries, parade the streets and *almedas*, or public walks, particularly on Sundays and holidays; but the promenade is not worthy of so fine a city, and loses much of its interest in the eyes of Europeans by the almost total absence of females, except such as are in their carriages. Handsome hackney-coaches, drawn by mules, stand ready for hire in the great square." Here the market is held, which is well supplied with every article of food, except fish, which must be obtained from a great distance, and is sent enclosed in

coarse paste pies, half-baked to preserve it. Poultry is plentiful and cheap, and the tropical fruits are supplied from the *tierras calientes*. Indeed, the necessaries, and most of the luxuries of life, may be obtained at a reasonable rate.

Puebla was once celebrated for its manufactory of coarse woollens; but this branch of industry has greatly fallen off. The manufacture of glass has of late been so much improved, that they are stated already to rival us in the texture and colour of their glass. Their coarse, red earthenware is also excellent; but their machinery is very rude, and no clay fit for porcelain has hitherto been discovered in the country. Soap is a considerable article of trade, being sent from Puebla to most parts of Mexico. One class of the inhabitants, Mr. Bullock omits to notice: like the capital, Puebla has its *lazzaroni*. The custom of begging in the streets existed in Mexico before the Conquest; and Cortes speaks of the Indians begging like rational beings, as an evidence of their civilisation. "And in fact," remarks the American, "it was the greatest he could have given: a people in the hunter state never beg or give in charity. In times of scarcity, the old and infirm are sometimes killed from compassion." Without entering here into the causes of mendicity and pauperism, (among which a mild climate and a fertile soil are adduced by this writer with less propriety than the daily allowance of provisions given away at the convent door,) it is our business to notice the fact. Although "not a house is to be seen that denotes the abode of poverty, yet," says this Traveller, "we met more miserable, squalid beings, clothed in rags, and exposing their deformities and diseases to excite compassion, than I have seen elsewhere."

The intendency of Puebla extends, on the south, to the Pacific, but has only 26 leagues of coast. On the north-east, it is bounded by the intendency of Vera Cruz; on the east, by that of Oaxaca; and on the west, by that of Mexico. Extending from lat. 16° 57′ to 20° 40′ N., it lies wholly within the torrid zone. Its greatest length, from the mouth of the small river Tecoyame, to near Mexitlan, is 118 leagues; and its greatest breadth, from Techuacan to Mecameca, 50 leagues. The population is very unequally distributed. Almost the whole country, from the central table-land towards San Luis and Ygualapa near the coast, is desert, though well adapted for the cultivation of the cane, the cotton-plant, and other productions of the tropics. The plain which extends from the eastern declivity of the *nevados** to the environs of Perote, especially between Cholula, Puebla, and Tlascala, contains the mass of the inhabitants. This intendency comprises some of the most remarkable vestiges of the ancient Mexican civilisation. Cholula, Tlascala, and Huetxocingo, (Huajocingo or Huexotzinco,) are the three republics which, for so many centuries, resisted the Aztec yoke. Besides these towns, the chief places are, *Atlixco*,† celebrated for its fine climate and great fertility; *Tehuacan de las Granadas* (or *de la Mixteca*), one of the most frequented sanctuaries of the ancient Mexicans; and *Tepeaca* (Tepeyacac), formerly called *Segura de la Frontera*, belonging to the mar-

* The words *Nevado* and *Sierra Nevada*, imply mountains whose summits enter the region of perpetual snow.

† At Atlixco, there is a very ancient and remarkable cypress (*ahahuete*), which measures not less than 76 feet in circumference. The diameter, measured inside, (for its trunk is hollow,) is 15 feet. It is, therefore, within a few feet, of the same thickness as the *baobab* of the Senegal.

quesate of Cortes. Three languages, totally different from each other, are spoken by the copper-coloured natives of this province: the Mexican, spoken by the inhabitants of Puebla, Cholula, and Tlascala; the Totonac, which is peculiar to the inhabitants of Zacatlan; and the Tlapanec, which is preserved in the environs of Tlapa. Near Chila, Xicotlan, and Ocotlan, in the district of Chiautla, also near Zapotitlan, in this intendency, there are very considerable salt-works. There are both gold and silver mines; but these, Humboldt says, are almost abandoned, or at least very remissly worked. He enumerates those of Yxtacmaztitlan, Temeztla, and Alatlauquitepic, in the *Partido* of San Juan de los Llanos; of La Canada, near Tetela de Xonotla; and of San Miguel Tenango, near Zacatlan. The progress of industry and prosperity in this province, has, he says, been extremely slow. There was formerly a flourishing flour-trade, the decline of which, the learned Traveller attributes to the enormous expense of carriage and the want of beasts of burden. Up to 1710, Puebla carried on a trade with Peru, in hats and earthen-ware, which has entirely ceased. "But the greatest obstacle to the public prosperity," he adds, "arises from four-fifths of the whole property belonging to mortmain proprietors; that is to say, to chapters, convents, corporations, and hospitals."* What changes the Revolution may have produced in this respect, we are not informed; but, as the Spanish Government shewed that

* The amount of money in mortmain in Mexico, was, in 1800, 44,500,000 dollars, (about 13,500,000*l.* sterling,) of which the diocese of Puebla possessed 6,500,000, and that of Mexico, 9,000,000; the regular clergy, for pious uses, 2,500,000; and churches and convents, by bequests for the like purpose, 16,000,000.—Humboldt, *Pol. Essay*, vol. i. p. 232; vol. iii. p. 99.

it did not consider this property as sacred and unalienable,* the Federal Government would have at least a fair precedent for converting it to public use.

The district of the old republic of Tlascala, which, Humboldt says, is inhabited by Indians peculiarly jealous of their privileges, and very much inclined to civil dissensions, had, under the colonial arrangement, its distinct government. By a change made in the financial administration a short time before his visit to Mexico, Tlascala, as well as Guautla de las Hamilpas, was detached from the intendency of Puebla, and united to that of Mexico, from which, at the same time, Tlapa and Ygualapa were separated. But, in the distribution of the provinces into federal states, Puebla and Tlascala were united. The government of Tlascala contained, in 1793, a population of nearly 60,000 souls, of whom upwards of two-thirds were Indians. The "boasted privileges" of the citizens of Tlascala were then reducible, according to Humboldt, to three points: "1. The town is governed by a cacique and four Indian alcaldes, who represent the ancient heads of the four quarters, still called Tecpectipac, Ocotelolco, Quiahutztlan, and Tizatlan; these alcaldes are under the superintendence of the Indian governor, who is himself subject to the Spanish intendent. 2. The whites have no seat in the municipality, in virtue of a royal order of the 16th April, 1585.

* "The ministry of Spain, not knowing how a national bankruptcy, brought on by a superabundance of paper money (*vales*), could possibly be avoided, issued a royal decree, dated Dec. 26, 1804, appointing not only the estates of the Mexican clergy to be sold, but also all the capitals belonging to the ecclesiastics to be recovered and sent into Spain, to be there applied in extinction of the royal paper." HUMBOLDT, *Pol. Essay*, vol. iii. p. 100. It seems that this measure was actually put in force to some extent, but the strong resistance it met with, prevented its being persisted in.

3. The cacique, or Indian governor, enjoys the honours of an *alferez real* (royal ensign)." The town of Tlascala is, however, so much reduced from its ancient importance, that it scarcely contained, in 1802, 3,400 inhabitants; and of these, not more than 900 were Indians of pure extraction. Its inhabitants were chiefly occupied in the manufacture of calicoes. The fortifications of Tlascala are mentioned by the learned Traveller among the remarkable vestiges of the ancient Mexicans in Puebla: they are, he says, of a construction posterior to the pyramid of Cholula. This town, however, lies so far out of the usual route to Mexico, that it appears not to have been visited by any modern traveller; and we are unable to satisfy the curiosity of our readers by any further account of it.*

CHOLULA.

CHOLULA, though a little out of the main road to Mexico, was visited both by Mr. Bullock and the American Traveller. The road from Puebla lies over a fertile plain, partly cultivated with wheat, rye, barley, the potato, and the agave, partly laid out as meadow land. To the north of the road are seen the rugged and barren rocks of the Cordillera of the *Sierra Malinche*;† and in the south, the volcanic *nevados* of Puebla tower above a chain of dark mountains which stretch along their base. Near these mountains stands Cholula; and to the east of the city,

* Mr. Bullock says, it is about 18 miles from Puebla. He intended to visit it on his return, but was prevented.

† Otherwise called the Cordillera of Matlacueye, or the Sierra of *Dona Maria* (the Virgin Mary). Malinche, Humboldt says, "appears to be derived from *Malintzin*; a word, I know not why, which has now become the name of the Holy Virgin."

on the road from Puebla, is the famous pyramid or *teocalli*, which is larger, and is said to have been deemed more holy, than any other temple in Mexico. At a distance, the appearance which it now assumes, is that of a natural conical hill, wooded, and crowned with a small church; but, as the traveller approaches it, its pyramidal form becomes distinguishable, together with the four stories into which it is shaped, although covered with vegetation, the prickly pear, the nopal, and the cypress. Those who wish to form a clear idea of this monument, says Humboldt, may imagine a square four times the dimensions of the *Place Vendome* at Paris, covered with a heap of bricks of twice the elevation of the Louvre. The base of the *teocalli* is almost double that of the great pyramid of Cheops; but its height is very little more than that of the pyramid of Mycerinus.* It appears to have been constructed exactly in the direction of the four cardinal points. The pyramid is built of unburnt bricks and clay, in alternate layers. The Indians believe that it is hollow; and they have a tradition, that, during the abode of Cortes at Cholula, a considerable number of warriors lay concealed within it, who were to have fallen suddenly on the Spaniards, had not the plot been detected and frustrated. It is certain, that, in the interior of this pyramid, as in other *teocallis*, there are considerable cavities intended for sepulchres. In making the present road from Puebla to Mexico, between twenty and thirty years ago, the first story was cut through, so that an eighth part remained isolated like a heap of bricks. In making this opening, a square chamber was discovered in the interior of the pyramid, built of stone, and

* The height is 177 feet; the length of the base, 1,423 feet.

supported by beams of cypress wood. The chamber contained two skeletons, some idols of basalt, and a number of vases curiously varnished and painted. No pains were taken to preserve these objects; but it is said to have been carefully ascertained, that this chamber had no outlet. Humboldt examined the ruins of this subterraneous chamber; and he observed, he says, a particular arrangement of the bricks, tending to diminish the pressure on the roof. "The natives, being ignorant of the arch, placed very large bricks horizontally, so that the upper course should pass beyond the lower. Similar vestiges of this rude substitute for the arch, have been found in several Egyptian edifices." * The ascent to the platform is

* We have referred, in a former note (at p. 36), to a passage in Dr. Robertson, who, misled by his authorities, affirms that the temple of Cholula "was nothing more than a mound of solid earth," and says, "it was faced partly with stone." Both assertions are now proved to be erroneous; and in the construction, form, and object of these Mexican *teocallis*, there is a striking analogy to the tumuli and pyramids of the old world. According to Herodotus, the temple of Belus was a pyramid, built of brick and asphaltum, solid throughout (πυργος στερεος), and it had eight stories. A temple (ναος) was erected on its top, and another at its base. In like manner, in the Mexican *teocallis*, the lower ναος was distinguished from the temple on the platform; a distinction clearly pointed out in the letters of Cortes. Diodorus Siculus states, that the Babylonian temple served as an observatory to the Chaldeans; so, the Mexican priests, says Humboldt, made observations on the stars from the summit of the *teocallis*, and announced to the people, by the sound of the horn, the hour of the night. The pyramid of Belus was at once a temple and a tomb. In like manner, the *tumulus* (χωμα) of Calisto in Arcadia, described by Pausanias as a cone made by the hands of man, but covered with vegetation, bore on its top a temple of Diana. The *teocallis* were also both temples and tombs; and the plain in which are built the houses of the sun and moon at Teotihuacan, is called the *path of the dead*. The groupe of pyramids at Gheeza and Sakkara in Egypt; the triangular pyramid of the queen of the Scythians, mentioned by Diodorus; the fourteen Etruscan pyramids which are said to have

by a flight of 120 steps.* In this elevated area, which comprises about 3,500 square yards,† a small chapel, surrounded with evergreen cypress-trees, and dedicated to the Virgin (*Nuestra Señora de los Remedios*), has succeeded to the temple of Quetzalcoatl, the Mexican Indra or god of the air. Here, mass is celebrated every day, by an ecclesiastic of Indian extraction, who constantly resides on the summit of this ancient monument; and here, the natives assemble in crowds from distant quarters, to celebrate the festival of the Virgin. When the author of "Notes on Mexico" was here in 1822, some additions were being made to the eastern side of the church. Mr. Bullock was present during the celebration of mass, when the chapel was crowded with Indians. It is built in the shape of a cross, about 90 feet in length, with two towers and a dome. The interior, he says, is kept remarkably neat and clean; and its silver and gilt ornaments were, on this occasion, adorned with a fine display of fresh flowers,

been enclosed in the labyrinth of King Porsenna at Clusium; the tumulus of Alyattes at Lydia (see Modern Traveller, *Syria and Asia Minor*, vol. ii. p. 162); the sepulchres of the Scandinavian king Gormus and his queen Daneboda; and the tumuli found in Virginia, Canada, and Peru, in which numerous galleries, built with stone and communicating with each other by shafts, fill up the interior of artificial hills;—are referred to by the learned Traveller as sepulchral monuments of a similar character, but differing from the *teocallis* in not being at the same time surmounted with temples. It is perhaps too hastily assumed, however, that none of these were destined to serve as bases for altars; and the assertion is much too unqualified, that "the pagodas of Hindostan have nothing in common with the Mexican temples." That of Tanjore, notwithstanding that the altar is not at the top, bears a striking analogy in other respects to the *teocallis*.—See HUMBOLDT'S *Researches*, vol. i. pp. 81—107; *Pol. Essay*, vol. ii. pp. 146—9.

* "We ascended by a steep, winding road, partly cut into steps."—BULLOCK. "We alighted, and ascended a flight of stone steps to the platform."—*Notes on Mexico.*

† Humboldt says, 4,200 square metres.

(among them some very fine carnations,) the offerings of the Indians. At the top of the steps of the entrance is a richly sculptured stone cross, with the date 1666 inscribed on it; near it, a short hymn in Spanish, to the Virgin, is engraved on a tablet. From this elevated platform, is seen an extensive and magnificent landscape. Beneath the spectator, lies the city of Cholula, with its great square crowded with Indians, and its numerous churches, surrounded by corn-fields, aloe-plantations, and neatly cultivated gardens. The plain is bounded by the *Malinche* range, which formerly separated the territory of the Cholulans from that of the Tlascalans; while the snowy peak of the gigantic Orizaba, and the still more majestic form of Popocatepetl, as well as the Iztaccihuatl, are seen towering above the distant mountains. The view takes in three mountains higher than Mont Blanc, two of which are volcanoes.

On descending to the plain, Mr. Bullock proceeded to examine "two detached masses, constructed, like the great pyramid, of unburnt brick and clay. The one to the north-east," he says, "had been cut or taken away; its sides were broken, and so perpendicular as to prevent access to its summit, on which a cross had been erected. The other was easy of ascent, and appears to me to have been a fortified place, with a ditch and a wall on the top, forming an enclosure nearly resembling the figure ∞, and about a hundred feet in length. Here I found among the loose earth, many human bones, pieces of red earthenware, and fragments of obsidian,'— the knives, spears, and arrow-heads of the ancient Mexicans. An excavation of this pile would probably prove an object of high interest to the antiquary. I know of no engraving of it. The other detached piece has been engraved by

Humboldt, whose figure of the great pyramid conveys no idea of its present state; nor is the church on its summit *at all like the original.*

"We were told of a fine picture in a church half a mile distant, and we walked to see it, but found its merit principally consisted in its grand frame and plate glass. The churchyard was, however, neatly planted with cypress, orange, rose-trees, &c. On our return to the *posada*, I inquired of our hostess the number of inhabitants which the village contained; but my designation of the place was indignantly repelled, and I was answered, that it had always ranked among the first Mexican cities;—that all the world knew, it was the warriors of Cholula who assisted the great captain in subduing the pagan capital, though, at the present time, the number of its population amounted only to 6,000."*

Cholula is described by Mr. Bullock as covering a large space of ground, and containing many regular and broad streets; the houses are mostly of one story, and flat-roofed. We could have wished for more minute information respecting a city which is described by Cortes as more beautiful than any in Spain, and well fortified, and in which, from the top of a *mosque* (as he calls the *teocalli*), he states that he reckoned more than four hundred towers. "On quitting Cholula," continues this Traveller, "we passed for a considerable distance under triumphal arches, formed of palm-trees and flowers, which had

* Bullock's Six Months in Mexico, pp. 114—16. Humboldt, however, states the population of the city in 1802, at 16,000. The district of Cholula, he says, contained, in 1793, a population of 22,423 souls. The villages amounted to 42, and the *haciendas* to 45. Both Tlascala and Cholula have doubtless declined in consequence of their proximity to Puebla.

been erected a few days previously, for a religious procession. Our road, or rather tract, lay through extensive plantations of the maguey, which is here raised in large quantities for the supply of the inhabitants of Puebla with their favourite *pulque*. After a drive of about two hours, we joined the great road, and, passing a few tracts of cultivated land, arrived in the evening at the town of St. Martin's." Here there is a very tolerable *mesón*, called the Holy Trinity, from the balcony of which, in a fair day, may be enjoyed what the Mexicans regard as the finest view of the volcanoes of Puebla. There are also a church and a convent, and, attached to the latter, a large, well-cultivated garden.

On leaving St. Martin's, the traveller enters on a tract of country covered with loose stones of porphyry, and thinly wooded with pines and cedars. The road soon begins to wind round the hills that separate the valley of Mexico from the plains of Puebla. At three hours' distance is a solitary *mesón* at the *Puente de Tesmelucos*, one of the vilest of Mexican inns. Three leagues further is Rio Frio, where also there is a *mesón* and shop, with a few wooden huts round it, inhabited by Indians. From this valley, the ascent is steep, winding round hills covered with fine woods of oak and pine, and carpeted with wild flowers. On gaining the summit of the pass, the traveller descends for some time through a thick wood, till, emerging from it into open country, he catches the first view of the valley of Mexico, with its lakes, its insulated hills, its snowy mountains, and its cultivated fields, interspersed with *haciendas* and villages, spread like a map beneath him. The city itself is concealed from view by an intervening mountain. It is a magnificent sight; but its beauties

vanish as the traveller rapidly descends into the valley. "The margins of the lakes are covered with marsh, and they are too much like stagnant pools; the fields are not well cultivated; the villages are built of mud, and the inhabitants are in rags. We passed," continues the American Traveller, "the *venta* of Cordova, whence there is a good view of the valley; and leaving the town of Chalco on our left, proceeded to the village of Yztapaluca. Chalco is situated at the north-eastern extremity of the lake, which is navigable for flat-bottomed boats from this place to the capital, by means of the canal of Iztapalapan. We stopped but a short time at Yztapaluca, and after passing through the small towns of Tlapizahua and Los Reyes, entered on a *calzada*, or paved causeway, about eighty feet wide, that traverses the margin of the lake of Tezcuco; having on the right, the whole expanse of the lake covered with white gulls and other water-fowl, and, on the left, low, marshy lands with pools of water, on which were vast numbers of wild ducks. As we drove along, my attention was attracted by swarms of very small, black, winged insects, fluttering in the ditches by the road side. They were driven forward by the wind, and were so numerous as to resemble, as they moved along, the flow of a stream of dark water: they flowed through one of the ditches leading to the lake, until lost in the water, blackening the surface to a great distance. About two or three miles before we reached the causeway, we distinguished the spires and churches of Mexico."

"The celebrated and splendid capital of New Spain, when first seen," says Mr. Bullock, "is discovered to be situated in a swamp. We proceeded over what was formerly a causeway across the lake; but still

this ancient and imperial city offers no ostentatious appearance: all is dismal and solitary. We had passed but one miserable hut in several miles; and the country in its immediate vicinity resembles the worst parts of Lincolnshire. Nothing around gives any idea of the magnificent city to which you are approaching. We arrived at the barriers,* and passing through a part of the shabby-looking troops that surrounded the city, entered the suburbs, which are mean and dirty, the people inhabiting them, covered with rags, or only wrapped in a blanket. So great was my disappointment, that I could scarcely bring myself to believe that I was in the capital of New Spain, the great mart of the precious metals, whence they flow to all parts of the habitable world. A few minutes more, however, brought us into the city, and I felt repaid for all the dangers and troubles I had undergone."

CITY OF MEXICO.

BEFORE, however, we enter the city, it may be interesting to recur to the very different aspect which the valley of Mexico and the capital of Montezuma presented to the "great captain" in 1520. Tenochtitlan was built, as has already been mentioned, on a groupe of islands in the midst of a lake. The centre of the present city is not less than 14,763 feet distant from the lake of Tezcuco, and nearly 30,000 from the lake of Chalco; yet, says Humboldt, "the city has certainly not changed its place; for the cathedral of Mexico occupies exactly the ground where the

* During the revolution, Mexico was surrounded with a breastwork of *pisé*, a very weak defence against a regular army, but formidable to the desultory forces that attacked it.

temple of Huitzilopochtli stood; and the present street of Tacuba is the old street of Tlacopan, through which Cortes made his famous retreat in the *melancholy night* (*noche triste*) of July 1, 1520. The difference of situation arises solely from the diminution of water in the lake of Tezcuco. It appears extremely probable, from geological observations, that the lakes had been on the decrease long before the arrival of the Spaniards, and before the construction of the canal of Huehuetoca.

The present city is situated entirely on the continent, (occupying a part only of the site of Tenochtitlan,*) between the extremities of the lakes of Tezcuco and Xochimilco. "Many circumstances," says Humboldt, "have contributed to this new order of things. The part of the salt-water lake between the southern and western dikes, was always the shallowest. Cortes complained that his flotilla, the brigantines which he constructed at Tezcuco, could not, notwithstanding the openings in the dikes, make the circuit of the besieged city. Sheets of water of small depth became insensibly marshes, which, when intersected with trenches or small defluous canals, were converted into *chinampas* and arable land. The lake of Tezcuco, which Valmont de Bomare supposed to communicate with the ocean, though it is at an elevation of 7468 feet, has no particular sources, like the lake of Chalco. When we consider, on the one hand, the small volume of water with which in dry seasons this lake is furnished by

* "We proceed for more than an hour on the road to Tanepantla and Ahuahuetes, among the ruins of the old city. We perceive there, as well as on the road to Tacuba and Iztapalapan, how much the Mexico rebuilt by Cortes is smaller than Tenochtitlan under the last Montezuma." — HUMBOLDT.

very inconsiderable rivers, and, on the other, the enormous rapidity of evaporation in the table-land of Mexico, of which I have made repeated experiments, we must admit, what geological observations appear also to confirm, that, for centuries, the want of equilibrium between the water lost by evaporation, and the mass of water flowing in, has progressively circumscribed the lake of Tezcuco within more narrow limits. We learn from the Mexican annals, that in the reign of King Ahuizotl, this salt-water lake experienced such a want of water as to interrupt navigation; and that to obviate this evil, and to increase its supplies, an aqueduct was constructed from Coyohuacan to Tenochtitlan. This aqueduct brought the sources of Huitzilopochco to several canals of the city which were dried up.

"This diminution of water, experienced before the arrival of the Spaniards, would no doubt have been very slow and very insensible, if the hand of man, since the period of the conquest, had not contributed to reverse the order of nature. Those who have travelled in the Peninsula know how much, even in Europe, the Spaniards hate all plantations which yield a shade round towns or villages. It would appear, that the first conquerors wished the beautiful valley of Tenochtitlan to resemble the Castilian soil, which is dry and destitute of vegetation. Since the sixteenth century, they have inconsiderately cut, not only the trees of the plain in which the capital is situated, but those on the mountains which surround it. The construction of the new city, begun in 1524, required a great quantity of timber for building and piles. They destroyed, and they daily destroy, without planting any thing in its stead, except around the capital, where the last viceroys have

perpetuated their memory by promenades (*paseos*, *alamedas*), which bear their names. The want of vegetation exposes the soil to the direct influence of the solar rays; and the humidity which is not lost by filtration through the amygdaloid, basaltic, and spongy rock, is rapidly evaporated and dissolved in air, wherever the foliage of the trees or a luxuriant verdure does not defend the soil from the influence of the sun and the dry winds of the south.

"As the same cause operates throughout the whole valley, the abundance and circulation of water have sensibly diminished. The lake of Tezcuco, the finest of the five lakes, which Cortes in his letters habitually calls an interior *sea*, receives much less water from infiltration than it did in the sixteenth century. Every where the clearing and destruction of forests have produced the same effects. General Andreossi, in his classical work on the Canal *du Midi*, has proved that the springs have diminished around the reservoir of St. Feneol, merely through a false system introduced in the management of the forests. In the province of Caraccas, the picturesque lake of Tacarigua has been drying up gradually ever since the sun darted his rays without interposition on the naked and defenceless soil of the valleys of Aragua.

"But the circumstance which has contributed the most to the diminution of the lake of Tezcuco, is the famous open drain, known by the name of the *Desague real de Huehuetoca*. This *cut in the mountain*, first begun in 1607, in the form of a subterranean tunnel, has not only reduced within very narrow limits the two lakes in the northern part of the valley, i. e. the lakes of Zumpango (*Tzompango*) and San Christobal; but has also prevented their waters in the rainy season from flowing into the basin

of the lake of Tezcuco. — These waters formerly inundated the plains, and purified a soil strongly covered with carbonate and muriate of soda. At present, without settling into pools, and thereby increasing the humidity of the Mexican atmosphere, they are drawn off by an artificial canal into the river of Panuco, which flows into the Atlantic Ocean.

" This state of things has been brought about from the desire of converting the ancient city of Mexico into a capital better adapted for carriages, and less exposed to the danger of inundation. The water and vegetation have in fact diminished with the same rapidity with which the *tequesquite*, or carbonate of soda, has increased. In the time of Montezuma, and long afterwards, the suburb of Tlatelolco, the *barios* of San Sebastian, San Juan, and Santa Cruz, were celebrated for the beautiful verdure of their gardens; but these places now, and especially the plains of San Lazaro, exhibit nothing but a crust of efflorescent salts. The fertility of the plain, though yet considerable in the southern part, is by no means what it was when the city was surrounded by the lake. A wise distribution of water, particularly by means of small canals of irrigation, might restore the ancient fertility of the soil, and re-enrich a valley which nature appears to have destined for the capital of a great empire.

" The actual bounds of the lake of Tezcuco are not very well determined, the soil being so argillaceous and smooth that the difference of level for a mile is not more than 7.874 inches. When the east winds blow with any violence, the water withdraws towards the western bank of the lake, and sometimes leaves an extent of more than 1968 feet dry. Perhaps the

periodical operation of these winds suggested to Cortes the idea of regular tides, of which the existence has not been confirmed by late observations. The lake of Tezcuco is, in general, only from nine feet to sixteen feet in depth, and in some places even less than three. Hence, the commerce of the inhabitants of the small town of Tezcuco suffers much in the very dry months of January and February; for the want of water prevents them from going in canoes to the capital. The lake of Xochimilco is free from this inconvenience; for from Chalco, Mesquic, and Tlahuac, the navigation is never interrupted, and Mexico receives daily, by the canal of Iztapalapan, roots, fruits, and flowers in abundance." *

But if, in point of situation, the present city lies under disadvantages from the bare, marshy, and barren aspect of the surrounding plain; and if, in point of extent, it covers less ground than the Aztec Venice; in every other respect the city of Cortes

* "Of the five lakes of the valley of Mexico, the lake of Tezcuco is most impregnated with muriate and carbonate of soda. The nitrate of barytes proves that this water contains no sulphate in dissolution. The most pure and limpid water is that of the lake of Xochimilco, the specific weight of which I found to be 1.0009, when that of water distilled at the temperature of 54° Fahrenheit was 1.000, and when water from the lake of Tezcuco was 1.0215. The water of this last lake is consequently heavier than that of the Baltic sea, and not so heavy as that of the ocean, which, under different latitudes, has been found between 1.0269 and 1.0285. The quantity of sulphurated hydrogen which is detached from the surface of all the Mexican lakes, and which the acetite of lead indicates in great abundance in the lakes of Tezcuco and Chalco, undoubtedly contributes in certain seasons to the unhealthiness of the air of the valley. However, and the fact is curious, intermittent fevers are very rare on the banks of these very lakes, of which the surface is partly concealed by rushes and aquatic herbs."

must be pronounced as superior to Tenochtitlan as the Rome of Augustus was to the Rome of Numa. "Mexico is undoubtedly," says Humboldt, "one of the finest cities ever built by Europeans in either hemisphere. With the exception of Petersburgh, Berlin, Philadelphia, and some quarters of Westminster, there does not exist a city of the same extent which can be compared to the capital of New Spain, for the uniform level of the ground on which it stands, for the regularity and breadth of the streets, and the extent of the public places. The architecture is generally of a very pure style; and there are even edifices of very beautiful structure. The exterior of the houses is not loaded with ornament. Two sorts of hewn stone (the porous amygdaloid, called *tetzontli*, and especially a porphyry of vitreous feldspar without quartz,) give to the Mexican buildings an air of solidity, and sometimes of magnificence. There are none of those wooden balconies and galleries to be seen which disfigure so much all the European cities in both the Indies. The balustrades and gates are all of Biscay iron, ornamented with bronze; and the houses, instead of roofs, have terraces like those in Italy and other southern countries..... However, it must be agreed, that it is much less from the grandeur and beauty of the public buildings, than from the breadth and straightness of its streets, and from its uniform regularity, its extent, and its position, that the capital attracts the admiration of Europeans."*

* M. Humboldt states, that he had seen successively, within a short space of time, Lima, Mexico, Philadelphia, Washington, Paris, Rome, Naples, and the largest cities of Germany: and yet, on comparing the impressions made by them respectively, he says, that Mexico had left on his mind a recollection of distinguishing grandeur, which he attributes in part to the majestic character of its situation and the surrounding scenery.

Many of the streets, Mr. Bullock states, are nearly two miles in length, perfectly level and straight, and with the ends terminating in a view of the mountains that surround the valley. The houses are, in general, of a uniform height, most of them having three stories, each from fifteen to twenty feet high. The fronts of most of the houses, like those of Puebla, are painted in distemper, white, crimson, brown, or light green; and owing to the dryness of the atmosphere, they retain their beauty unimpaired many years. Some have inscriptions upon them taken from Scripture, or stanzas addressed to the Virgin. "Numbers of houses are entirely covered with glazed porcelain in a variety of elegant designs and patterns, often with subjects from sacred history, giving the whole a rich mosaic-like appearance. The walls of the great staircases are frequently covered in the same manner, and mixed with a profusion of gilding, which, in contrast with the blue and white porcelain, has really a splendid effect. The walls of several of the churches are finished in the same manner."

The *Plaza Major*, or grand square, is one of the finest that is to be seen in any metropolis.* The east side is occupied by the cathedral; the north, by the splendid palace of the viceroy; the south, by a fine row of houses, in the centre of which is the palace of the Marquess de Valle (Cortes), now called the *Casa del Estado*;† and the west has a range of buildings, with a piazza in front, consisting of many good shops, public offices, granaries, &c. About the centre of the square is a colossal equestrian statue of Charles IV., on a pedestal of Mexican marble; said to be the finest

* See plate.

† Built on the site of the palace of Montezuma. See p. 38, *note*.

specimen of casting in the New World. * The pleasing effect of the grand square is, however, much impaired, Mr. Bullock states, by the intrusion of a "trumpery building called the *Parian*, a kind of market or bazaar, held principally by the Spanish shopkeepers. This erection is a disgrace to the taste of the Government which permitted it to spoil one of the noblest squares they have; but the revenues it brings to the city are at present so necessary, that its speedy removal is hopeless."

The cathedral, which stands on the ruins of the great *teocalli* of the god Mexitli, is a somewhat heterogeneous edifice. The front is very singular. One part of it is low and of bad Gothic architecture: the other part, which is of recent construction, is in the Italian style, and has much symmetry and beauty. Its two handsome towers are ornamented with pilasters and statues. "The interior is imposing,—larger, loftier, and more magnificent than the cathedral of Puebla. The distribution is the same, but the great altar not quite so rich. The dome is bold, and is painted with great taste. The sanctuaries contain some tolerable paintings, and are neatly ornamented.

* This statue was executed at the expense of the viceroy, Marquess de Branciforte (brother-in-law to the Prince of Peace). "It weighs 450 quintals, and was modelled, founded, and placed by the same artist, M. Tolsa, whose name," adds Humboldt, "deserves a distinguished place in the history of Spanish sculpture." In the chapel of the *Hospital de los Naturales*, there is a sepulchral monument, erected by the Duke de Monteleone to the memory of his great ancestor, which is executed by the same artist. It is adorned with a bust in bronze, representing Cortes in the prime of life. "Wherever we traverse Spanish America," remarks Humboldt, "from Buenos Ayres to Monterey, and from Trinidad and Porto Rico to Panama and Veragua, we no where meet with a national monument erected by the public gratitude to the glory of Christopher Columbus or of Hernan Cortes!"

On the whole, this church would do credit to any city in Europe." * It is about 500 feet in length. "On entering," says Mr. Bullock, "I felt something like disappointment, notwithstanding the extent and magnificence of the interior. The centre is nearly filled by the ponderous erections which entirely obstruct its otherwise fine appearance, and the high altar is, as well as that in the cathedral of Puebla, too large for the place it occupies. Like most of the churches in this country, it is loaded with a profusion of massive carved and gilt ornaments, pictures, and painted statues. Many of the smaller paintings appeared to be of value, and works of the old Spanish and Italian masters; but they are so placed, and in such an obscure light, that it is not possible to judge decisively of their merit. There are in the apartments adjoining the cathedral, allegorical and sacred subjects, pictures of a prodigious size, and of considerable skill in their composition and design, though few of them are executed by masters held in estimation in Europe.

"The high altar and its appendages are enclosed by a massive railing, of great extent, of cast metal, said to have been founded in China, from models sent from Mexico. The figures which ornament it are very numerous, but of poor execution and design. The metal, resembling brass, is considered to be of such value, on account of the gold it contains, that a silversmith of Mexico is said to have made an offer to the bishop to construct a new rail of solid silver, of the same weight, in exchange for it.

"Divine service is celebrated here with great magnificence. Mass is regularly said every half hour from daylight till one o'clock, exclusive of the high mass,

* Notes on Mexico, p. 54.

and other occasional masses. In no place are religious ceremonies observed with greater pomp or splendour. The procession which I saw from this cathedral far exceeded, in order and regularity, in the grandeur of the vestments, in the costliness and value of the sacred ornaments, and in gold and silver, any thing I ever witnessed. The processions of Rome, or any other city of Europe, suffer much in the comparison.

"In the Mexican churches we do not meet with that distinction so universal with us, of pews and seats. Here, on the same floor, the poorest Indians, and the highest personages in the land, mix indiscriminately in their prayers to that Being to whom earthly distinctions are unknown. In South America, persons of property are (or were till lately) always preceded to church by slaves, carrying handsome cushions for their masters, but this is a luxury unknown in this country. The newly-arrived European is shocked at the idea of kneeling on the boards which form the floors of the churches, and which are left loose to receive the bodies of the dead; for this is the place of burial: but it is not customary to erect any monument, nor is even the name inscribed to point out to surviving relatives or friends the spot of interment. In no part of New Spain did I observe any memorial of the dead, except in the chapel which contains the bones of the conqueror Cortes; where a fine bronze bust, cast by Tolsa, is placed near them. Funerals are performed here in a very unostentatious manner; the same coffin being used for ages to remove the bodies of the deceased. How different in this respect are the pleasing customs of the Swedes and other northern nations of Europe, where the graves of the departed are kept in the greatest order by surviving relations, and weekly

visited and planted with fresh flowers! I have often witnessed in Sweden, and in some parts of North Wales, with pleasure, on a Saturday evening, whole families employed in this affectionate office."

Within the enclosure of the cathedral, (which is of stone pillars and chains,) and sunk in the earth, so that the surface alone is visible, is the remarkable stone called the Stone of Sacrifices. It was found, together with a great number of idols and other remains of Aztec sculpture, in Dec. 1790, in digging twenty or thirty feet deep, in order to level the great square. It is of porphyry, about nine feet broad, or twenty-five in circumference, of a cylindrical form. In the centre is a head in relief, surrounded by twenty groupes * of two figures each, all represented in the same attitude; and one of the figures is always the same,—a warrior with his right hand resting on the helmet of a man who is offering him flowers in token of submission. The other figure, supposed to be the vanquished warrior, wears the dress of the nation to which he belongs, and behind him is a hieroglyphic denoting the conquered province. In the upper surface of the stone, there is a groove of some depth, which is thought to have been designed to let the blood of the victims run off. "As the Mexican prisoners were offered up in the temples, it would," Humboldt remarks, "appear natural enough, that the triumphs of a warrior king should be figured round the fatal stone on which the *topiltzin* (sacrificing priest) tore out the heart of the unhappy victim. Notwithstanding, I am inclined to think, that the Stone of the Sacrifices was never placed at the top of a *teocalli*, but was one of those

* So says Humboldt, and M. Dupé copied the whole relief; yet Mr. Bullock, who also took casts of the whole, says, that it consists of *fifteen* groupes.

stones called *temalacatl*, on which the combat of the gladiators took place between the prisoners of rank destined to be sacrificed, and a Mexican warrior. Placed on the *temalacatl*, surrounded by an immense crowd of spectators, they were to fight six Mexican warriors in succession: if they were fortunate enough to conquer them, their liberty was granted them, and they were permitted to return to their own country; if, on the contrary, the prisoner sank under the strokes of one of his adversaries, a priest dragged him, dead or living, to the altar, and tore out his heart." *

At the same time that this stone was discovered, two other very curious Aztec monuments were brought to light; the Calendar Stone, and the colossal statue of the goddess Teoyaomiqui.† The former, popularly called "Montezuma's watch," is worked vertically into the wall of the cathedral, so as to expose the whole surface. It is of basaltic porphyry; its actual weight more than twenty-four tons; and as no mountain within eight or ten leagues of the city could furnish a porphyry of this grain and colour, we may imagine the difficulties which the Mexicans must have had to surmount, in transporting so enormous a mass to the foot of the *teocalli*. In the centre is a hideous

* See, for the learned Traveller's reasons and authorities for this opinion, *Researches*, vol. i. p. 266. Mr. Bullock states, that he has seen the Indians, as they passed, throw stones at this supposed altar; "and I once saw," he adds, "a boy jump upon it, clench his fist, stamp with his foot, and use other gesticulations of the greatest abhorrence."

† A "very credible person" assured M. Humboldt, that the foundations of the cathedral are surrounded by an immense quantity of idols and reliefs; and that the three masses of porphyry above mentioned, were the *smallest* of those discovered in digging to the depth of twelve metres. Near the *Capilla del Sagrario*, a sculptured rock was found, seven metres long, six broad, and three in height.

head, sculptured in relief, representing, we are told, "the sun in his four motions." It is surrounded by a double circle of hieroglyphics, and beyond them are three other circles richly ornamented in relief. The circles, with all their numerous divisions and subdivisions, are traced with mathematical precision. "The more minutely the detail of this sculpture is examined," remarks Humboldt, "the greater taste we find in the repetition of the same forms, that attention to order, and that feeling of symmetry which, among half-civilised nations, is a substitute for the feeling of the beautiful."* If the Aztecs had no other tools than such as were made of obsidian, it would be inexplicable how they could have executed this rich sculpture on so hard a stone; but it is certain that they had also edge-tools of copper mixed with tin, which were almost as sharp as steel instruments. † The colossal statue, which lies concealed by a few inches of earth in one of the galleries of the university, was disinterred in compliance with the request of Mr. Bullock, (a favour previously granted to M. Humboldt,) to allow him to take a cast of it; it was then replaced, and again hidden from the gaze of the vulgar. We have already given that gentleman's description of this hideous idol.‡—From the summit of the towers of the cathedral, there is a fine view of the plain, of which both Humboldt and our American Traveller speak in high terms.

* Humboldt has given a representation of this curious sculpture (*Researches*, plate xxiii.); and Mr. Bullock brought home an impression of it in plaster, which forms one of the articles of his Exhibition of Ancient Mexico. The yawning mouth and protruded tongue of the god *Tonatiuh* (or the Sun) remind us, Humboldt remarks, of the figure of a Hindoo divinity, — Krishna assuming the form of *Kala*, Time: it is *Chronos* devouring his children.

† Humboldt, Pol. Essay, vol. iii. p. 113. ‡ See page 200, *note*.

The Palace, or Government-house, is described by Mr. Bullock as a truly magnificent building. "It is nearly square, its front measuring several hundred feet. In its interior are four large square courts, round which most of the public offices are distributed, together with the prison, the mint, barracks, and the botanic garden." The Mint, "the largest and richest in the whole world," and the house of separation (*casa del apartado*), in which is carried on the separation of the gold and silver of the ingots of auriferous silver, are among the chief objects of interest to a stranger. The latter contains three sorts of works; a glass manufactory, the preparation of nitrous acid, and the separation of the gold and silver. All the three processes are conducted in a very imperfect manner; and as the description would but little interest the general reader, we shall content ourselves with referring for the details to the great work of Humboldt.* He mentions an opinion entertained by several persons "interested in the works," that the vapours of nitrous acid which are diffused by their means through the most populous quarters of the city, serve to decompose the *miasmata* of the surrounding lakes and marshes. The works of the Mint (*moneda*) consist of ten sets of rollers, moved by sixty mules, to press out the bars to the required size; fifty-two circular cutters; nine adjusting-tables; twenty milling-machines and stamping-presses; and five mills for amalgamating the filings and sweepings.† Each stamping-press is said

* Humboldt's Pol. Essay, vol. iii. pp. 484—7; see also Notes on Mexico, p. 59. The glass is composed of 0.46 of quartz and 0.54 of soda.

† "The rooms, staircases, and every part of the building are carefully swept from time to time. At the last change of the administration, as the rooms had not been swept for several years, this operation yielded 20,000 dollars."—*Notes on Mexico*, p. 60.

to be capable of coining upwards of 15,000 dollars in ten hours, so that they are able to manufacture daily from 14 to 15,000 marcs of silver. The silver produced in all the mines of Europe together would not suffice, Humboldt states, to employ the mint of Mexico more than fifteen days. The operations, however, are performed in a very awkward manner, and the machinery is very imperfect. "At present (1823), about 200 workmen are employed;* but when the mines were in full operation, 400 men were engaged, and 80,000 dollars *per diem* were coined here, independently of what was done by the other mints." Humboldt has given a table of the annual coinage from 1690 to 1803 inclusive, from which it appears, that the total amount of gold and silver which passed through the mint of Mexico within that period (114 years), was 1,353,452,020 piasters, equal to 284,224,924*l.* sterling. Another table, furnished by the author of Notes on Mexico, giving an account of the coinage of gold, silver, and copper, from 1802 to 1821 inclusive, presents a total of 303,319,928 dollars.† But, besides the vast amount of *specie* thus sent into circulation, the quantity of the precious metals converted into plate at Mexico, was proportionably large. "There are few countries," says Humboldt, "in which a more considerable number of large pieces of wrought plate, vases, and church ornaments, are annually executed, than in Mexico. The smallest towns have gold and silver smiths, in whose shops workmen of all castes are employed. The Academy of Fine Arts, and the schools for drawing in Mexico and Xalapa, have very

* Exclusive of 15 engravers, 5 assayers, and 30 persons in the different offices; and there are never fewer than 100 mules in the stables.

† Pol. Essay, vol. iii. p. 291; Notes on Mexico, p. 63.

much contributed to diffuse a taste for beautiful antique forms. Services of plate to the value of 150 or 200,000 francs have been lately manufactured at Mexico, which, for elegance and fine workmanship, may rival the finest work of the kind ever executed in the most civilised parts of Europe. The quantity of precious metals which, between 1798 and 1802, was converted into plate at Mexico, amounted, at an average, to 385 marcs of gold (Castile weight), and 26,803 marcs of silver, *per annum*." * Mr. Bullock, however, draws a melancholy picture of the altered aspect of things in this golden capital. "The existing state of this city," he says, "exhibits only a shadow of the grandeur it had once attained. The present internal decorations but ill accord with the magnificent houses and palaces on which thousands have been lavished, and which prove at once the poverty of the present Mexicans, and the wealth of their ancestors. The massive silver tables, staircases, and chandeliers, &c., have all disappeared. The profusion of jewels, and the extravagant equipages, are no longer to be seen in the streets." The American Traveller states, that the houses are not so well furnished as those of the cities in the United States, although the apartments are more lofty and spacious, and there is an air of solidity and grandeur about the whole habitation. Yet, on festival days, Mexico still wears a splendid appearance.

To return from this digression, and resume our office of *cicerone*. The Botanical Garden, which occupies one of the courts of the viceroy's palace, is very small, but it is extremely rich in rare and interesting productions. "Though situated," says Mr. Bullock,

* Pol. Essay, vol. iii. pp. 477, 8.

"in the centre of a large and populous city, every vegetable production seems in perfect health and vigour. It affords to the stranger a most delightful retreat from the mid-day sun, and to the botanist, or admirer of the works of nature, a treat not to be met with elsewhere in New Spain, or perhaps in the world. It is handsomely laid out in the Spanish fashion, with flagged walks, bordered with elegant large pots of flowers. The walks are rendered cool by the creeping plants that are trained over them. They diverge from a large stone basin in the centre, constantly supplied by a fountain with water, which, in small rivulets, spreads itself over every part of this little paradise, — imparting freshness and life to thousands of elegant plants and flowers, unknown to the eye of a European, but which here, in a climate of eternal spring, in the open air, bloom and send forth their fragrance without the assistance of man, and produce a very different appearance from the dwarfish, sickly exotics of our hot-house, which, with every possible care and attention, with difficulty linger a few years without re-producing their species. Apples, pears, peaches, quinces, and other European fruits flourish here, in company with bananas, avocatas, and the most delicious sapotas I ever tasted. The celebrated hand-tree, which has excited so much attention among botanists, is in great perfection here."

To describe all the public buildings in Mexico, would require a separate publication. An American gentleman counted one hundred and five cupolas, spires, and domes, within the limits of the city; and there are said to be fifty-six churches, besides the cathedral.* The convents are thirty-eight in number;

* Notes on Mexico, p. 72.

twenty-three of monks, and fifteen of nuns. The Franciscan convent is an immense establishment, with an annual income of nearly 21,000*l.*, arising principally from alms. Its church is a fine one, and, as well as the numerous apartments, courts, and cloisters of the monastery, which form a perfect labyrinth, is covered with large paintings, describing the miracles and life of the saint. The church of San Domingo, which is attached to the Dominican monastery, is splendidly ornamented. The capitals of the columns and the sanctuaries in the interior, are richly gilded, and the whole has an aspect of magnificence. The convent is of great extent, and contains a numerous collection of pictures and statues. Since the Revolution, it has been occasionally used as a temporary place of confinement for state prisoners. "A few months before my arrival," says Mr. Bullock, "it contained some of the principal members of the congress, who had here comfortable apartments, and were well entertained. Escape from it was impossible, though it contains sufficient space to lodge several thousand persons, allowing ample room for exercise. In the paved yard or court in front of the church, we were shewn a large flat stone, with a square hole in its centre, in which, my informant told me, was fixed the stake to which the victims of the Inquisition were formerly fastened, previously to their being burnt. This tribunal was, till its abolition by the ex-emperor in 1820, under the jurisdiction of the Dominicans.

"The Palace of the Inquisition is on the opposite side of the street, and near the place of execution. In this house, persons accused of ecclesiastical crimes were confined. I had been told, previously to my arrival in Mexico, of its horrible subterraneous cells, in which the wretched captives were imprisoned; but

this must evidently have been an exaggeration, as no subterraneous places ever existed in the city of Mexico, nor ever can exist, as, wherever the ground is excavated, even for a few feet, water instantly springs up. In the great square, while I was digging for the purpose of taking a cast of the sacrificial stone, at only three feet, we were obliged to employ persons constantly to lade out the water. This palace is very elegant, and exhibits little or no appearance of the purposes for which it was intended. It was occupied as a polytechnical school at the time I was in the city, but was then on sale.

"The monastery of the *Professa* is also well worthy the attention of strangers: the fitting up of its elegant church is in a more modern style than the others, and its appearance is as fresh and brilliant as at the hour it was finished. When lighted up on particular or great occasions, the profusion of its superb silver and gilt chandeliers and massive candelabras, filled with wax-lights, produce a magnificent effect."*

St. Augustine's church, it is added, should not be missed. Among the others which deserve the traveller's notice, the church of Sta. Theresa is very handsomely ornamented, and the architecture is in good taste; that of *La Encarnacion*, attached to a large

* In this convent, there is a curious series of pictures, representing the heart of man possessed by the devil and the deadly sins, and the regeneration of it to religion and virtue. "The first picture represents a large heart with a human head on the top of it; within are depicted a frog, a serpent, a goat, a tiger, a tortoise, a peacock, and a hog, with the devil in the centre, with a long tail and a pitchfork. In the second picture, the devil and all these animals are represented half-way out of the heart, and a white dove half-way in. In the third, the devil and the animals are afar off, and the dove has entire possession of the heart."—*Notes, &c.* p. 73.

convent, is very rich and splendid, and its principal altar is surmounted by a pyramid of embossed silver, at least 15 feet high; that of *Espiritu Santo* is excessively gaudy, and in the worst taste possible; that of *Enseñanza*, attached to a convent, is all gilding and glitter; those of the Carmelite convent and San Inez are very neat and handsome; but the Author of "Notes on Mexico" was most pleased, he states, with the church of Jesus Maria, attached to a nunnery. "A row of Corinthian columns with gilt capitals extend round the church; the dome and ceiling are richly decorated and painted in the best manner; and the whole church is fitted up with great elegance and in the purest taste."

"In front of the churches, and in the neighbourhood of them," adds this Traveller, "we saw an unusual number of beggars; and they openly exposed their disgusting sores and deformities to excite our compassion. No city in Italy contains so many miserable beggars, and no town in the world so many blind. This is, I think, to be attributed to constant exposure, want, and the excessive use of ardent spirits. Many are blind from the effects of the small-pox, which, before the introduction of vaccination, raged frequently in this country, and was a fatal disease."

The hospital of Jesus or *de los Naturales*, founded by Cortes, deserves to rank among the most interesting objects in the capital. It is for the maintenance of children and old people, and now unites two separate foundations. "This establishment," says Humboldt, "in which both order and cleanliness may be seen, but little industry, has a revenue of 250,000 francs (10,470*l.* sterling)." In one of the rooms are several family portraits, among which is one of the great captain himself. Here, too, is shewn "the

identical embroidered standard under which he wrested the empire from the unfortunate Montezuma;" also, a massive mahogany table which belonged to Cortes. In the chapel, a strong iron-bound chest is exhibited, containing the bones of the conqueror of New Spain. Mr. Bullock was allowed to inspect them, and he attentively examined, he says, the cranium; but all he was enabled to infer from it, was, that the person of Cortes must have been small.

The *Mineria*, or School of Mines, was originally a magnificent building, but, owing to want of proper care in piling, or some other defect in the foundation, it has settled in several places, and the front is visibly out of the perpendicular. In the interior, the building is still more disfigured; the walls are cracked and broken, and in some places, the ceilings have fallen in; so that, though recently completed, it has the appearance of being in ruins. Part had already been taken down at the period of Mr. Bullock's visit; and the whole must eventually follow. There was a good philosophical apparatus in one of the rooms, where lectures used to be delivered, and the students were taught every branch of natural history and philosophy, to qualify them to be useful superintendents of mines; but the funds of this excellent institution have been diverted to other uses, and the lectures and studies, in 1822, had ceased. In one of the apartments is a collection of minerals,—a very limited one; and on the *azotea* (terrace roof) is the observatory where Humboldt made his astronomical observations.

The Academy of Painting and Sculpture (*Academia de los Nobles Artes de Mexico*), an institution which owed its existence to the patriotism of several public-spirited individuals, and the patronage of the minister Galvez,—has shared the fate of the School of Mines.

The spacious building assigned to it by the Government, is neglected and falling to ruin, owing to the funds being diverted to other uses to meet the exigencies of the State.* "There is not now," says Mr. Bullock, "a single pupil in the academy; and though the venerable president still lives, he is in a state of indigence, and nearly blind." There is a very fine collection of casts here, which is said to have cost the King of Spain upwards of 8,000*l.* "We are astonished," says Humboldt, "on seeing that the Belvidere Apollo, the Laocoon, and still more colossal

* "The revenues of the Academy of Fine Arts amount to 125,000 francs (5,200*l.* sterling); of which the Government gives 60,000, the body of Mexican miners nearly 25,000, and the *consulado* or association of merchants more than 15,000.....Instruction is communicated *gratis*. It is not confined to the drawing of landscapes and figures; they have had the good sense to employ other means for exciting the national industry. The Academy labours successfully to introduce among the artisans a taste for elegance and beautiful forms. Large rooms, well lighted by Argand's lamps, contain every evening some hundreds of young people, of whom some draw from *relievo*, or living models, while others copy drawings of furniture, chandeliers, or other ornaments in bronze. In this assemblage, (and this is very remarkable in the midst of a country where prejudices of the nobility against the castes are so inveterate,) rank, colour, and race are confounded. We see the Indian and the Mestizo sitting beside the White, and the son of a poor artisan in emulation with the children of the great lords of the country. It is a consolation to observe, that under every zone, the cultivation of science and art establishes a certain equality among men, and obliterates, for a time at least, all those petty passions of which the effects are so prejudicial to social happiness."—HUMBOLDT's *Pol. Essay*, vol. i. pp. 213, 14. In the Report made by the Secretary of State to the Sovereign Constituent Congress, Nov. 8, 1823, this establishment, which still remained closed for want of funds, is specially recommended to the attention of the legislature, together with the other public institutions that had suffered dilapidation and impoverishment. It is also recommended to Congress to appropriate the *Hospital de los Naturales* for the purpose of a national museum and school of medicine, and to lay out a new botanic garden.

statues, have been conveyed through mountainous roads at least as narrow as those of St. Gothard; and we are surprised at finding these masterpieces of antiquity collected together under the torrid zone, in a table-land higher than the convent of the great St. Bernard." These casts were still, in 1822, in excellent preservation; but how long they might remain so, was doubtful: the roof was partly off immediately over them, and the rain fell upon the floor. A few pictures, none of them very good, were thinly scattered along the walls; and there was to be seen a long line of benches and desks, with designs and models for the pupils, "as if they had left them on the yesterday," whereas no lessons had been given for more than a year. This institution had scarcely existed long enough to have left any decided traces of its efficiency. Mr. Bullock gives a deplorable account of the present state of the arts in Mexico. "Not one landscape or architectural painter," he says, "remains in this great city; and the only few artists are those who copy religious subjects for the churches, and some who attempt portraits, but they are deplorably bad. The principal employment for the pencil seems to be in the decorations of coach-bodies, and the heads of the wooden bedsteads; and in the metropolis, a few pictures of the Infant Saviour, the Virgin, Magdalen, St. Joseph, St. Anthony, or St. Cuthbert, are the only productions of modern painters which are to be met with. Of the myriads of pictures with which the churches, convents, cloisters, &c. &c. are crowded, I saw few worth the expense of removing. The churches and cathedrals may, amongst the great numbers with which they are encumbered, have some good, and I am inclined to think they have; but the quantity of light admitted into these superb temples is too little,

even in the brightest day, to render it practicable to discover their merits: they are lost to the world in the sacred gloom that pervades the place. The public, too, are prevented from a near approach by clumsy railings; but, from what information I was enabled to obtain by peeping through, it appeared to me that some of the finest productions of the Italian and Spanish schools may be here buried in oblivion.

"I visited the houses of many of the nobility, but found little worthy of notice. The Count of Valenciana's drawing-room has a set of prints from Claude, which, with the exception of a few fine things in the palace of the Bishop of Puebla, are the only works worth mentioning, connected with the old masters, that came under my inspection.

"In the many rambles I made through the city, I often examined the brokers' and furniture shops; as, amongst the countless number of statues and pictures of saints and martyrs, I expected to have found something worth bringing home: but all my researches in this way only produced me two small pictures; one on copper, (the Adoration of the Shepherds,) an early picture, or a copy, of Correggio; the other a Holy Family, somewhat in the style of Carlo Maratti.

"I had imagined that the amazing and rapid accumulation of wealth which had accrued to several individuals from the working of the silver mines, would have caused some of the productions of European art, either through devotion or taste, to have made the voyage across the Atlantic; but this does not appear to have been the case, or, if it was, they have accompanied the Spaniards in their retreat to their mother-country.

"I saw no traces of the occupation of the sculptor in marble: this may be accounted for by the customs

of the country forbidding the use of monuments,—nor are there any fire-places which could admit of such ornaments. Of carvers in wood there are many, as every house has a statue of a saint or madonna, painted and generally superbly dressed. The art of engraving on stone is unknown in Mexico; but the Indians greatly excel in the modelling and working in wax. The specimens of different tribes with their costumes, with the habiliments of the gentry of the country, which I have brought over, will amply testify their merits in this department. They also model fruit and vegetables in a beautiful manner. A lady at Puebla de los Angeles executes, in a singular style, from pieces of old linen cloth, groupes of comic figures, some of which I have also brought to England. Such was her skill, that, from having only seen me for a short time, on my first passing through the city, I was surprised to find, on my return, that she had executed a portrait of me in this style, which was immediately recognised by my friends."

We must not omit to notice the university and the public library, although both the edifice and the collection are pronounced by Humboldt to be unworthy of so great and ancient an establishment. The university was founded in 1551. The building is very spacious, and the institution is said to be well endowed: there have been as many as 200 students at one time, but there were in 1822, very few. Besides the university, there are inferior colleges and several large schools under the direction of the regular clergy. "Most of the people in the cities," says the American Traveller, "can read and write. I would not be understood as including the *leperos;* but I have frequently remarked men clothed in the garb of extreme poverty, reading the gazettes in the street.

Of these there are three published every other day in the week, which are sold for 12½ *cents* a-piece; and pamphlets and loose sheets are hawked about and sold at a reasonable rate. There are several booksellers' shops, which are but scantily supplied with books. The booksellers have hitherto laboured under all the disadvantages of the prohibitory system of the Roman Catholic church, but are now endeavouring to furnish themselves with the best modern works. The few books to be found in the shops are extravagantly dear. There are several valuable private libraries; and many Creole gentlemen, who have visited Europe, have a taste both for literature and the fine arts. This is certainly more rare among those who have never been out of their own country. The means of education were more limited under the colonial system, and liberal studies were discouraged. The Latin language, law, theology, and philosophy, were taught in the colleges, and only so much of the latter as the clergy thought might be taught with safety. To give some idea of the influence of this class in the city of Mexico, I will merely observe, that there are five hundred and fifty secular, and sixteen hundred and forty-six regular clergy. Humboldt says, that, in the twenty-three convents of monks in the capital, there are twelve hundred individuals, of whom five hundred and eighty are priests and choristers; and, in the fifteen convents of nuns, there are two thousand one hundred individuals, of whom about nine hundred are professed nuns." *

The children of the nobility and wealthy inhabitants are principally taught at home. The places

* Notes on Mexico, pp. 83, 84.

of public instruction in the greatest repute, are the *Seminario* and *San Ildefonza.* Lancastrian schools were established in the capital by the emperor; and his ex-majesty assured Mr. Bullock, that it was his intention to extend them throughout the provinces. "There are now," says this Traveller, "three or four daily papers (1823); but they contain very little information; they are only just beginning to insert advertisements, *gratis*, in the same manner as they were in England at the commencement of our newspapers."

Medical and chirurgical knowledge is represented to be at the lowest ebb. Dissections are not allowed by law. "An able oculist would be a valuable acquisition and blessing to Mexico, where diseases of the eye are so prevalent: there is not a native who can perform an operation. Several young physicians from the United States had arrived, and were getting into practice, although labouring under the great disadvantage of not knowing the Spanish language."

Since the period of this Traveller's visit to Mexico, there is reason, however, to believe that some improvement has taken place. One of the first objects to which all the republican governments have turned their attention, has been the means of public instruction. The Report of Don Lucas Alaman, the Secretary of State, to the Sovereign Constituent Congress, in Nov. 1823, contains this noble declaration: "WITHOUT EDUCATION, LIBERTY CANNOT EXIST; and the more diffused is the former, so much the more solidly cemented will be the latter. The intimate conviction of this truth" (the Report proceeds to state) "induced the Government, in the midst of its pecuniary difficulties, to foster the establishments destined for this important object by every

means in its power." Under the head of PRIMARY SCHOOLS, it is stated: "The constitution entrusted the care of these to the city councils, which, for want of funds, have not been able to give them that perfect organization of which they are susceptible. There are many places where there are no primary schools, and in others, they are almost useless from the incapacity of the masters, owing to the lowness of the salaries; and almost every where is remarked, a culpable neglect on the part of the fathers, who forget the obligation imposed upon them by society and religion, to give their children a Christian education. The Government has encouraged a society, founded in this capital by some individuals zealous for the public good, for the purpose of establishing the system of mutual instruction which has made such rapid progress in Great Britain, in the greater part of Europe, and in the United States. With this object, a school has been established in a convent, capable of containing 1,600 children, who will be taught, not only the first rudiments, but other branches of literature by the same method. Government would wish that, on the model of this society, and in imitation of it, others might be established, in correspondence with it, so as to procure those succours which can be furnished only by an establishment already formed, and which are less scarce in this capital, than in other cities of our territory." Further, under the head of READING ROOMS, the Report states: "In order to facilitate general instruction by reading, and to place before all the acts of Government, so that, by being better known, they may be more punctually executed; it has been ordered, that in every city-hall there should be a public reading-room, to be furnished with all the laws and other papers circulated

by Government, so that all persons may read and understand them. And the political chiefs have been directed to invite the inhabitants to contribute small sums monthly towards the support of these establishments, which might then subscribe for periodical papers and other useful works, as has already been done in some cities."* These regulations, together with others suggested in this interesting Report, cannot fail to be attended with the most beneficial results.

Among the public institutions must be enumerated the "national establishment for affording temporary relief to persons in pecuniary distress,"—in other words, a government establishment for pledging goods, which occupies an extensive building opposite the Franciscan monastery. Mendicity, we are told, prevailed in the days of Montezuma; but the Mexicans had not then advanced so far in civilisation as to have pawnbrokers' shops. These, however, are very naturally connected in the New World, as well as in older countries, with the propensities to gambling and intoxication ascribed to the *leperos* of Mexico. Mr. Bullock, having procured an introduction to the director of this establishment, a highly esteemed ecclesiastic, gives the following particular description of it. "I was shewn property of all kinds, deposited as pledges for money advanced. A room of great extent and strength was filled with various articles of value. Whole services of plate were piled up one upon another. Massive silver vessels, dishes, crucifixes, statues of saints, pictures with silver frames, articles of female decoration, diamonds, pearls, and some very fine rubies and emeralds, by their presence,

* Notes on Mexico; Appendix.

impress upon the beholder at once the past opulence and present reduced condition of the country. Property sent here remains for a certain term on the payment of a small interest, when, if not redeemed, it is offered for sale by private contract, with the lowest price affixed to each article. If, in a given period, it remains unsold, it is then put up in a monthly sale by auction, sold to the best bidder, and the overplus of what has been advanced, after deducting interest and expenses, is paid over to the original proprietor. The establishment is open every afternoon. The crowd that filled the court attested the humble fortunes of the bulk of the people. We remarked, that the jewellery deposites were less in proportion than any other species of property; and the conductor accounted for it by observing, that those Spaniards who had returned, or were about to return to the mother-country, converted their dollars into more portable articles, that they might convey them about their persons with greater security. This, too, accounts for my having sold the old doubloons which I had brought with me to the capital, for twenty-two dollars, though intrinsically worth only sixteen: they afterwards fell to eighteen. The discerning reader will at once perceive the difference between this establishment and the pawnbrokers' shops of England. With us, the distressed individual is but too often at the mercy of an interested person; but the public functionary of the Mexican institution has no interest of his own to serve; and perhaps, a still greater public advantage accrues from the American plan, by preventing the facility with which stolen property is disposed of with us."

PUBLIC AMUSEMENTS.

In a Roman Catholic country, religious shows and festivals occupy the first rank among public amusements. Mexico has but one place of dramatic exhibition: it is a good building, and of considerable size; the interior shaped like a horse-shoe, narrowing considerably towards the stage, so that few of the spectators in the boxes can see the whole of it. There are four tiers; every box having a projecting balcony, where the ladies display themselves and their finery to great advantage. The pit has three divisions, each a different price; and every seat is separated by arms, and numbered. The house is lighted from above by glass lamps. The orchestra, Mr. Bullock styles indifferent; the scenery, dresses, and machinery, inferior to the theatrical exhibitions seen at Bartholomew fair; and the performers, below mediocrity. The American Traveller witnessed the performance of a translation from the French opera of *Cœur de Lion*. "His Imperial majesty," Don Augustin Iturbidé, sat in a box next the stage, fitted up very magnificently; but his presence did not seem either to animate the audience, or to inspire the actors, and the play went off very heavily.* When Mr. Bullock was there the

* The writer had the honour of being presented to his Imperial Majesty, and he gives the following account of the interview, and of the impression which it left upon his mind. "The Emperor was in his cabinet, and received us with great politeness. Two of his favourites were with him. We were all seated, and he conversed with us for half an hour in an easy, unembarrassed manner, taking occasion to compliment the United States and our institutions, and to lament that they were not suited to the circumstances of his country. He modestly insinuated that he had yielded very reluctantly to the wishes of the people, but had been compelled to

following year, "the woful change that had taken place among the inhabitants of this once gay city," was visible in the depopulated boxes of the theatre. "Not a tenth part of the house was occupied; and of those present, but very few were females, and they were not dressed for the occasion as in Europe,—wearing no ornaments, except one young lady of distinction who had a plume of black feathers on her head.

suffer them to place the crown upon his head, to prevent misrule and anarchy. He is about five feet ten or eleven inches high, stoutly made, and very well proportioned. His face is oval, and his features are very good, except his eyes, which were constantly bent on the ground, or averted. His hair is brown, with red whiskers, and his complexion fair and ruddy, more like that of a German, than of a Spaniard. As you will hear his name pronounced differently, let me tell you that you must accent equally every syllable, I-tur-bi-de. I will not repeat the tales I hear daily of the character and the conduct of this man. Prior to the late successful revolution, he commanded a small force in the service of the Royalists, and he is accused of having been the most cruel and blood-thirsty persecutor of the Patriots, and never to have spared a prisoner. His official letters to the Viceroy substantiate this fact. In the interval between the defeat of the Patriot cause and the last revolution, he resided in the capital; and, in a society not remarkable for strict morals, he was distinguished for his immorality. His usurpation of the chief authority has been the most glaring and unjustifiable; and his exercise of power, arbitrary and tyrannical. With a pleasing address and prepossessing exterior, and by lavish profusion, he has attached the officers and soldiers to his person; and so long as he possesses the means of paying and rewarding them, so long he will maintain himself on the throne: when these fail, he will be precipitated from it. It is a maxim of history, which will probably be again illustrated by his example, that a government not founded on public opinion, but established and supported by corruption and violence, cannot exist without ample means to pay the soldiery, and to maintain pensioners and partisans. To judge Iturbidé from his public papers, I do not think him a man of talents. He is prompt, bold, and decisive, and not scrupulous about the means he employs to obtain his ends."—*Notes, &c.* pp. 66—8.

Two or three Canton crape shawls were the only coloured articles of dress to be seen. With very few exceptions, all present, of either sex, pursued their favourite habit of smoking; the ladies even in the boxes, with a fan in one hand, and a cigar in the other, enveloped in a smoke that rendered it difficult to see from one side of the house to another."* The theatre was open every night, and *twice on Sunday*, on which day, and on holydays, the price of admission was double. But the establishment paid so ill, that its final close was announced from the stage while Mr. Bullock was present.

A Spanish capital cannot be supposed to be without its *plaza de toros* for bull-fights. A large circular enclosure is appropriated for this national diversion, fitted up exactly like that at Madrid, and nearly as large, calculated to contain between two and three thousand spectators. In 1822, a company of equestrians from the United States, had erected a circus within the spacious area, where they performed their feats of horsemanship before an immense crowd of spectators. Cock-fighting too, we are informed, is a national amusement in Spanish America; and the Government derives (or did derive) a considerable revenue from the pits. Mr. Bullock witnessed a cock-

* The American Traveller was astonished to see several "young ladies, pretty and well dressed," smoking cigars in the public walk. "I knew," he says, "that it was the custom of the ladies to smoke, but supposed they would do so only in private. The Mexican gentlemen do not seem to dislike it; and the tale of love is whispered, and vows of fidelity are interchanged, amidst volumes of smoke;—a bad omen, which, if report speaks correctly, is too often verified." Near the suburbs is the cigar manufactory, in which from five to six hundred persons are employed in making up *cigarros* and *puros*.

fight on Whitsunday,* which was crowded with persons of both sexes and all ages, including several well-dressed females, who seemed to take no small interest in the inhuman pastime.

The *Alameda*, or public promenade, situated on the north side of the city, did not appear to this Traveller worthy of the other establishments. It is laid out in paved walks diverging from different centres, with fountains and statues "in very bad taste and worse execution." The roads are wide enough to admit the passage of carriages, and it is much frequented on Sundays and festivals. There is a fountain in the centre, supplied with water from the great aqueduct leading from Santa Fe to the city. The water is carried along in trenches, so as to water the plants and trees, and is then discharged into the lake. This aqueduct, which passes close by the Alameda, is 33,464 feet in length: it is supported on arches of brick and stone, plastered over. The springs of Santa Fe are near the chain of mountains that separate the Valley of Mexico from that of Lerma and Toluca. Another aqueduct, 10,826 feet in length, conducts the water of Chapoltepec to the city. The arches of this aqueduct, 904 in number, are nine feet six inches apart; the columns are four feet thick; and the width is about six feet six inches. The column of water is two feet three inches wide, and two feet deep. The water of Chapoltepec is the best; that of Santa Fe being impregnated with carbonate of lime. The ancient city of Tenochtitlan had several extensive aqueducts; and the remains of the work by which the waters of Amilco (a spring near Santa Fe) were con-

* It is due to this Traveller to state, that he apologises for having consented to accompany his host to this exhibition,—the first he had ever witnessed.

veyed, may still be seen. It had double pipes of baked earth, one set of which served to convey the water while the other was cleaned.

There is another drive and ride, called the *Paseo Nuevo;* a broad road, raised about three feet above the meadow-land that surrounds the city, and planted on both sides with a species of willow, "a tall, stiff, conical tree resembling the Lombardy poplar." It is about two miles long, and terminates suddenly near a bridge and gate, through which passes the canal of Chalco. The American writer describes it as he saw it, crowded with carriages; "some whirling rapidly along, and others drawn up round the open circle in the middle of the road, where the ladies amuse themselves for hours, examining the equipages that roll by, and nodding, smiling, and shaking their fans at their acquaintance as they pass. This constitutes the afternoon's amusement of the wealthy. The bodies of their coaches are large, but of a very good form and well painted; a little too fine, as will be thought when I add, that Guido's Aurora frequently adorns the middle pannel. The carriage is very clumsy: from the axle of the fore, to that of the hind wheel, the distance is not less than twelve feet; and there is moreover a projection of two or three feet before and behind, on which are fastened the leathers that suspend the coach. They are very easy vehicles to ride in, and I shall soon be reconciled to their appearance."*

There is a third drive, called the *Paseo de las*

* Coach-makers excel all the other mechanical arts practised in Mexico. Their vehicles are firmly put together, of handsome forms, and well finished. The best painters of the country are employed in their decoration; and the gilding and varnishing equal what is done in Europe, whence the handles and ornamental parts in metal are procured."—BULLOCK, p. 211.

Vigas, a raised causeway planted with trees, along the side of the canal leading to the lakes of Xochimilco and Chalco; but it is not much frequented. Friar Gage, an English traveller of two hundred years ago, describes the Alameda as "a pleasant, shady field, like unto *our Moorfields*." This comparison will but little assist the reader in imagining the place, unless he has seen, in some history of London, a representation of what Moorfields was at the period referred to. The *Paseo Nuevo* seems to resemble the ring in Hyde Park.

The market may not inappropriately be mentioned among the amusements of the capital. "One of the most interesting sights to an inquisitive stranger in Mexico," says Mr. Bullock, "is a ramble early in the morning to the canal which leads to the Lake of Chalco. There, hundreds of Indian canoes, of different forms and sizes, freighted with the greatest variety of the animal and vegetable productions of the neighbourhood, are constantly arriving: they are frequently navigated by native women, accompanied by their families. The finest cultivated vegetables which are produced in European gardens, with the numberless fruits of the torrid zone, of many of which even the names are not known to us, are piled up in pyramids, and decorated with the most gaudy flowers. In the front of the canoes, the Indian women, very slightly clothed, with their long, glossy tresses of jet-black hair flowing luxuriously to the waist, and often with an infant fastened to their backs, push the canoes forward with long slender poles. In the centre, under cover, the remainder of the family are seated, mostly employed in spinning cotton, or weaving it, in their simple portable looms, into narrow webs of blue and white cloth, which forms their principal clothing.

Other boats are loaded with meat, fowls, turkeys, and a profusion of wild ducks, which they pluck and prepare on their road to market; generally throwing the feathers, which they consider of no value, into the water. Others again are freighted with Indian corn in bulk or straw, the general food for horses, reared like floating pyramids. Milk, butter, fruit, and young kids, are all in the greatest plenty; and, what adds to the picturesque appearance of the whole, is, that nearly every canoe has a quantity of red and white poppies spread on the top of the other commodities; and, if there be a man on board, he is usually employed in strumming on a simple guitar for the amusement of the rest. The whole of this busy scene is conducted with the greatest harmony and cordiality. These simple people seldom pass each other without saluting. 'Buenos dias, Señor, or Señora,' is in every mouth, and they embrace each other with all the appearance of sincerity.

"They land their cargoes a little to the south of the palace, near the great market; and remove their various commodities on their backs to the place where they deposit them for sale. This market is well worth visiting at an early hour;—then, thousands of Indians, assembled with their various commodities for sale, many of them from a considerable distance, form one of the most animated sights that can be witnessed."

The meat market is tolerably well supplied with beef, mutton, and pork, not of the very best quality, but "by no means bad;" and there is game in abundance,—wild ducks,* birds of various sorts, venison,

* The quantity of wild ducks of various kinds, brought to market, is, we are told, surprising; 25,000 have been sold in a year, and at a very low price. The most plentiful are the shoveller

hares, rabbits, turkeys,—not to speak of tortoises, frogs, a sort of shrimp, and axolotes,* (a species of salamander resembling a water-newt,) all good eating. The profusion and variety of fruits and vegetables are greater than in any other market in Europe or America. "The great market," says Mr. Bullock, "is larger than Covent Garden, but yet unequal to contain the quantity daily exposed to sale. The ground is entirely covered with every European kind, and with many the very names of which we have scarcely heard. Besides the articles furnished for the table, numbers of Indians dispose of wool, cotton, coarse calico, manufactured skins, earthenware, baskets, &c.; and it is an amusing scene to witness them collected in large parties, with their children, seated on the ground, enjoying their frugal meals of *tortillos* and *chile*. But, unfortunately, in the lanes near the market are found numbers of pulque-shops (*pulquerias*), where the men are seen enjoying their favourite beverage, and indulging in their propensity to gaming; and in more than one instance, I have noticed these generally good-natured creatures, when heated by *pulque* or *aguardiente*, and soured by the ill fortune of the day, venting their disappointment on the persons of their unoffending wives."

TRADES AND COSTUME.

"THE appearance of the shops in Mexico," continues the same Traveller, "affords no indication of the

(*anas clypeata*) and the teal (*anas crecca*). They are chiefly eaten by the poor.

* These were so plentiful in the time of Cortes, that his army principally subsisted on them. "I have seen them by thousands," says Mr. Bullock, "in the markets of Toluca."

wealth of the city. Nothing is exposed in the windows. All are open, in the same manner as in London till the sixteenth century;" (he might have said much later;) "few have signs or even names in front; and most trades are carried on in the shops in which the articles are sold." Goldsmiths and silversmiths must rank at the head of the trades: numbers of this craft are to be found in every city and town in Mexico. All the ornaments are finished by hand; there are some good chasers, but, in general, Mr. Bullock says, the work is clumsy. In the manufacture of gold and silver thread for embroidery, they excel. In 1803, the manufactured gold amounted to 385 marcs, and that of silver to 26,803 marcs. Precious stones and pearls are dearer than in Europe, and there are few good, except rubies. The coach-makers have already been honourably mentioned as standing at the head of the Mexican mechanics. The cabinet-work is coarsely and clumsily made; the wood used is chiefly cedar and pine, mahogany being scarcely known.* The tailors sit on stools, instead of the shop-board; no wonder that clothes "are seldom well made," though 300 *per cent* dearer than in England. Cloth coats, Mr. Bullock says, were only beginning to supersede the printed calico jacket. The milliners are "brawny fellows of all complexions, with mustachios." Confectionary is a good trade; there are five hundred different kinds of *dulces*. "The druggists' and apothecaries' trades," adds this gentleman, "must also

* "Most of the chairs in the best houses are made in the United States. It will be learned with surprise, that in this country, the saw (except a small hand-frame) is still unknown: every plank, and the timber used in the erection of all the Spanish American cities, are hewn by Indians with light axes from the solid trees, which make each but one board." — BULLOCK.

be excellent ones: their prices are exorbitant." This, however, is not always a fair criterion, especially considering the large stock which appears to be required. "An apothecary's store," it is added, "generally occupies six times the space which a similar establishment does in England. I was shewn one in Puebla, which engrossed the whole of a very large house. Thousands of boxes, drawers, cases, bottles, and jars were arranged in the greatest order, together with an extensive chemical apparatus. Among the drugs, we observed many long exploded in Europe; such as parts of various serpents, &c. &c." As at Xalapa and Puebla, barbers assert their ancient importance, and the price of a clean beard is half a physician's fee. "Their shops are numerous, and generally make a handsome show with the display of the utensils of their trade, mixed with pictures and prints, grinding-stones, and burnished brass basins, resplendent as the helmet of Mambrino." Of coopers, Mr. Bullock saw none: the skins of hogs are substituted for barrels. Bakers' shops are large establishments, and no where can better bread be had, than here. *Pulquerias* and brandy-shops are but too numerous, and "by the gay display of their variously coloured poisons in handsome decanters, present such a temptation to the poor Indians, that few who possess a *media* can carry it home."* The water-carriers are a numerous body: they bring it from the aqueducts to private houses, in large globular jars, poised on their backs, and supported by a strap from their heads, from which is suspended another smaller one, to serve as a counterpoise. "These men," says Mr. Bullock,

* Humboldt states the quantity of *pulque* annually consumed at Mexico, at the enormous number of 44 millions of bottles.

"seem to have a great aversion to the article in which they deal; for, at an early hour, they may be seen in a *pulquefied* state, stretched on the bare ground in the fulness of enjoyment."

In all the towns, hats, shoes, and sadlery are manufactured. The beaver hats made in the capital are excellent; and those of wool, used by the peasants, are well adapted to the country. The tanned leather is very indifferent. The making of cutlery and hardware is scarcely attempted: what is done, is wretchedly executed. Cast iron is almost unknown in New Spain, its use for culinary purposes being supplied by their excellent earthenware. Paper has never hitherto been made in Mexico, but has been imported from Europe. Nor are there any native watch-makers: the few watches that are worn, are cheap articles, chiefly of French or Swiss manufacture.* There is a manufactory of playing-cards, and one of coarse printed cottons; but the manufactures have suffered much; and comparing their state in 1822, with what they are represented to have been by Humboldt in 1802, their produce is supposed to have diminished one half. Nothing can be worse than the system on which they are conducted, both as to the principle and their effect on society. "Every manufactory that requires many hands, is strictly a prison, from which the wretched inmates cannot remove, and where they are treated with the utmost rigour. Many of them are really confined for a number of years for crimes against the laws; and others, by borrowing a sum of money from the owners, pledge their persons and their labours till they redeem it, which, it often

* Messrs. Roskell, of Liverpool, have recently established a house at Mexico in this line of business.

happens, is never done. The proprietor, instead of paying them in money, supplies them with spirits, tobacco, &c.; and by these means they increase, rather than liquidate the original debt. They have mass said for the wretched inmates on the premises; but high walls, double doors, barred windows, and severe corporal punishments inflicted in these places of forced industry, make them as bad as the worst conducted gaol in Europe. As the people receive their ideas of manufactories from such places, can we wonder," adds Mr. Bullock, "at the detestation in which they are held? What must their opinion of Europe be, which they are taught to consider as the place where all the manufactured articles imported are produced, and, as they suppose, by the same system? But this state of things cannot long remain. A liberal government like the present, will surely devise a remedy for so great an evil; while the introduction of artisans from Europe, and the steam-engines which are now erecting at two of the mines, will give the natives an idea of our mechanical knowledge, and tend greatly to prepare them for improvement." In fact, in the Report of Don Lucas Alaman, already referred to, the Government recommends the repeal of all duties on the importation of machinery, with a view to favour their introduction into the country. Some machines for spinning cotton were already, it is stated, established at Puebla; and in the neighbourhood of the capital, an individual was about to erect a paper-mill.

British manufactured goods were beginning to come into vogue in the capital, especially our muslins and calicoes, printed and plain, and cotton stockings; but the low-priced French woollens and German linens were preferred to the English. Our blue and white

earthenware was in great request, as also English beer and porter, which sometimes sold at four or five dollars the bottle, the bottle itself costing half a dollar. Breweries, however, were about to be established.

There is one calling or profession in Mexico, which we have not noticed, to which reference is made by the American Traveller in the following description of a morning's walk through the city. "In my walk this morning, under the porticoes leading to the principal square, I was struck with the singular exhibition they presented of the busy, the idle, and the devout. The shops were filled with tradesmen and purchasers. Under the porticoes were men and women selling fruits and flowers, and wax-work representing with great accuracy the costumes of the country; the work of Indians, and the best of the sort I have ever seen. *Leperos* were leaning against the columns, sunning themselves; and beggars, and little urchins selling pamphlets and gazettes, followed us with loud clamours. In the midst of this scene of noise and confusion, I observed two women on their knees before a picture of the Virgin, which is enclosed in a glass case, and has always tapers burning before it. They were abstracted from all that was passing around them, and appeared to be really and devoutly absorbed in prayer. While looking at them and at the crowd, the tinkling of a small bell was heard; it announced the passage of the host from the cathedral to the death-bed of a sinner. In an instant all was still. Shopkeepers and their customers, *leperos* and noisy children, all doffed their hats and knelt on the pavement, where they remained till the host was out of sight, devoutly crossing themselves all the while. We then rose, and the hum, and bustle, and clamour were gradually renewed.

We crossed the square, where there are always a number of hackney coaches standing, (better, I think, than the *jarvies* and *fiacres* of London and Paris,) to the statue of Charles IV.; where, seated on the steps of the enclosure, we found a class of men called *evangelistas*. Their business is, to indite memorials and epistles for those who cannot write themselves. Wrapped in his blanket, and furnished with pen and ink, and a basket full of paper, the evangelist is ready to furnish letters in verse or prose to all who apply for them. I listened for some time to one of them, who was writing a letter for a pretty young girl, and was artfully drawing her sentiments from her. The facility with which these men write, is surprising. Memorials to ministers and judges, letters of condolence or congratulation, and epistles breathing love and friendship, succeed each other rapidly, and appear to cost but little effort. Some of them are tolerable *improvisatori* — a faculty more common among the people of Spanish America, than it is even among the Italians."

The costumes of the various classes vary considerably. "The dresses of the Spaniards," says Mr. Bullock, "and higher class of white natives, differ but little from those worn in Europe. The men and boys often appear in the streets in the long cloak; and in the house, light jackets of printed calico are generally worn. They shave less often than we do; and when on a journey, or as long as they are indisposed, that operation is not performed.

"The dresses of the ladies, and even of children, in the streets, is universally black; the head of the former generally uncovered, or only a slight veil thrown over it. They take great pains with

their fine hair, and are particularly neat about the feet, the stocking being usually of fine silk. This is their morning appearance, in which they are seen going to, or returning from church, to the duties of which they are very attentive. No well regulated family omits hearing mass every morning, mostly before breakfast.

"On holydays, processions, and other public occasions, the dresses of the ladies are very gay, but not of such expensive materials as those worn by our fashionables; artificial flowers are used in abundance, but ostrich feathers sparingly. It is generally in their carriages that the ladies appear in public, and very seldom on horseback.

"The dress of the country gentlemen, or *paysanos*, is showy and expensive; and, when mounted on their handsome and spirited little horses, they make an elegant appearance. The lower dress consists of embroidered breeches, chiefly of coloured leather, open at the knees, and ornamented with numbers of round silver buttons, and broad silver lace; a worked shirt with high collar; and a short jacket of printed calico, over which is generally thrown an elegant manga or cloak of velvet, fine cloth, or fine figured cotton, the manufacture of the country; these are often embroidered, or covered with a profusion of gold lace. On the feet are soft leather shoes or boots, over which is tied a kind of gaiter, peculiar to the country; they are commonly of cinnamon-coloured leather, wrapped round the leg, and tied with an ornamental garter: these are very expensive articles, the leather being cut in relievo in a variety of elegant patterns, which is done by the Indians in the interior provinces, in a manner that it would be difficult to copy in Europe. They are sold from eight to forty or fifty

dollars the pair, and at that price yield a poor remuneration to the makers. Yet they are an article of great consequence in the fitting-out of the Mexican beau, who often appears in this kind of boot, richly embroidered in gold and silver, which costs upwards of one hundred dollars. The stirrups and spurs correspond in magnificence and workmanship to the boots. The hat is of various colours, large, and the crown very flat and low, bound with broad gold or silver lace, and with a large round band and fringe of the same. They are elegant and well calculated to guard the sun from the head and shoulders. The decorations of the horse are also expensive; the great Spanish saddle, with its broad flaps, is richly embroidered with silk, gold, and silver, and the high-raised front is covered with the same metals. The stirrups are often of silver, while those of the lower classes are of wood. The bridle is small, with a very large and powerful bit, by means of which the riders suddenly stop their fine little horses when at full speed.

"The dresses of the country ladies are showy, but not elegant: worked shifts, with a light open jacket, and a richly embroidered or spangled petticoat, of bright coloured soft cloth (often scarlet or pink), seem to be the unvarying costume."

The dresses of the poorer classes and Indians have already been described.* The American Traveller says: "These Indians are much darker than those of our borders; their hair is straight and glossy, the lips rather thick, the nose small, and the eye inclining upwards, like that of the Chinese and Mongols. Their bodies are stout, and their limbs nervous.

* See page 203.

They are not generally tall, but are strong and active. According to our notions of beauty, they are not a well-favoured race. The women are not well formed, have harsh features, and, like those in Europe who are much exposed to the weather, and who labour hard, look old and wrinkled very early in life. They have all a melancholy expression, and are remarkably docile and obedient. To the Europeans they are very submissive, and are mild and even polite in their demeanour to each other. I have not yet witnessed any altercation among them that bore the semblance of a quarrel. They all talk the Aztec or Ottomic, and the Spanish, which they speak very purely. I have made them frequently pronounce the name of the capital in their own language, and find they all pronounce it Mexico, as we do, and not with the Spanish sound of the *x*, Mec-hico." *

Humboldt represents the city of Mexico as distinguished for its excellent police. "The streets for the most part have very broad pavements; and they are clean and well lighted. These advantages are the fruits of the activity of the Count de Revillagigedo, who found the capital extremely dirty." If in this respect, however, the police is good, in our usual sense of the term it is far otherwise. "The porter of our house," says the American Citizen, "seeing me go out in the evening when I first arrived without being armed, remonstrated on what he was pleased to call my rashness; and on inquiry, I found that it was deemed imprudent to do so. I was told that robberies and assassinations were frequent, and

* The name Mexico is of Indian origin, signifying, in the Aztec language, the habitation of Mexitli, the god of war, otherwise called Huitzilopochtli.

that not fewer than 1200 assassinations had been committed since the entrance of the revolutionary army into the capital. On looking over the journal of the first *junta*, I perceive that these disorders were a frequent subject of debate, and were attributed to the soldiery. I could not learn that any of them had been detected and punished. The city, notwithstanding, is lighted, and guarded by watchmen: the lamps are furnished with reverberators, and many of the streets are better lighted than those of New York or Philadelphia." The Report of the Secretary of State to Congress, adverts to the scandalous violations of personal safety not only on the public roads and throughout the country, but even in the interior of the towns. "An obstinate and bloody war," it is said, "which for twelve years laid waste our country, and transformed the instruments of husbandry into weapons of death and destruction,—the ruin of farms, and other inevitable consequences of domestic tumults,—accustomed the inhabitants to violence and assassinations." The most decisive measures have since been adopted to secure the prompt administration of public justice and the establishment of internal tranquillity.

The population of the capital, in 1802, (including the troops, who were reckoned at from 5 to 6000 men, regulars and militia,) was estimated by Humboldt at 137,000 souls; of whom 2,500 were Europeans; 65,000 Creoles; 26,500 mestizoes (many of them almost as white as the preceding classes); 10,000 mulattoes; and 33,000 copper-coloured natives. Of this number, nearly 3000 were clergy, monks, and nuns. A subsequent census made the population amount to 160,000 souls. One still later reduced it to 126,000. "From all the information I

could obtain," says the Author of Notes on Mexico; "I am disposed to estimate the actual population at between 150 and 160,000 inhabitants. The extent of the city is computed to be a square of between three and four miles, and it is compactly built up." *

The physical situation of the city of Mexico, considered in reference to its communication with the rest of the civilised world, is, in some respects, peculiarly advantageous. Humboldt may, however, be thought to have over-rated the importance of its geographical position, when he remarks, that, "placed on an isthmus washed by the South Sea and the Atlantic Ocean, Mexico appears destined to possess a powerful influence over the political events which agitate the two continents." It may be true, that the government might transmit its orders in five weeks to the European continent, and in six weeks to the Philippine islands in Asia; as well as that this vast kingdom might, under a careful cultivation, produce almost all that commerce collects together from the rest of the globe. But the state of the coasts and the want of

* Humboldt says: "It forms a square of which each side is nearly 2,750 metres (9000 feet). The streets being very spacious, they in general appear rather deserted; the more so, as in a climate considered as cold by the inhabitants of the tropics, people expose themselves less to the free air than at the foot of the Cordillera." It is decidedly the most populous city of the New World, although Rio bids fair to rival it in this respect. In 1802, the births were 6,155, the deaths 5,166; a smaller number of births, and a greater mortality, than in the country, where the births are reckoned as 1 to 17 of the population, and the deaths as 1 to 30. For the mortality, Humboldt accounts by the conflux of patients to the capital for medical aid. The convents, the celibacy of the clergy, the militia, the progress of luxury, and the indigence and habits of the *leperos*, are assigned in explanation of the small number of births. The consumption of wheaten bread is equal to that of the cities of Europe; and yet, the consumption of maize is almost as large as that of wheat.

ports, as well as the very configuration of the country, preclude its ever becoming a great maritime power, while they oppose obstacles to its commercial prosperity; and neither the wealth nor the greatness of a nation depends on the variety of its productions. Humboldt determines the latitude of the capital to be 9° 25′ 45″; the longitude, 101° 25′ 30″.—We must now take a brief survey of

THE ENVIRONS OF MEXICO.

The valley of Mexico, situated in the very centre of the Cordillera, is of an oval form, about 67 leagues in circumference, and comprising 244½ square leagues, of which 22 only, or less than one-tenth, are now occupied by the lakes. The crest of the porphyritic mountains which surround it like a circular wall, is most elevated on the south, particularly on the south-east, where the great volcanoes of Puebla bound the valley. One of the roads to Cholula and Puebla passes between the Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl, by Tlamanalco, Ameca, La Cumbre, and La Cruz del Coreo. It was by this road that Cortes passed, with his troop and 6,000 Tlascalans, on his first invasion, when Diego Ordaz is said to have made the attempt to reach the summit of Popocatepetl, for which Charles V. gave him permission to enter a volcano in his coat of arms.*

* Mr. Bullock could not find, he says, that any one now living had seen a volcanic eruption, although in Humboldt's picturesque atlas the peak of Orizaba is represented as still smoking. For this, however, the learned Traveller himself apologises, admitting that he never observed any smoke come from it. "I have no doubt," he says, "that the Iztaccihuatl is an extinguished volcano; but no Indian tradition goes back to the time when this mountain vomited fire. The same observation applies to the *nevado* of Toluca····M. Bonpland and myself saw a mass of ashes and very

During his stay at Mexico, M. Humboldt saw such immense falls of snow in the mountains, that the two volcanoes were almost united by one band of snow. Six great roads from the capital cross the Cordillera in different directions: 1. What is termed the new road of La Puebla, by Rio Frio and Tesmelucos, which has been described in the preceding pages. 2. The old road, by S. Bonaventura, and the Llanos de Apan, which passes between the volcanoes. 3. The road of Pachuco, which leads to the celebrated mines of Real del Monte, by the *Cerro Ventoso*, covered with oak, cypress, and rose-trees almost perpetually in flower. 4. The road of Queretaro, Guanaxuato, and Durango, called the road of the interior (*el camino de tierra adentro*), which leads, in a northerly direction, over hills scarcely 260 feet above the pavement of the great square. 5. The road of Toluca, by Tianguillo and Lerma; a magnificent causeway, constructed with great art, partly on arches. 6. The road over the summit called La Cruz del Marques, and through Cuernavaca, to Acapulco.

One of the pleasantest excursions in the immediate vicinity of the city, is to Chapoltepec, distant about a league on the road to Toluca; an insulated hill of porphyry, surrounded by a most luxuriant vegetation, the summit of which is crowned with a castle, or rather villa (*chateau de plaisance*), built by the young viceroy Galvez, at an expense (to the crown) of upwards of 60,000*l*. The castle has been finished externally, but the apartments were never furnished, the project being disapproved by the court of Madrid, after this enormous expense had been incurred; and

dense vapours issue from the mouth of the Popocatepetl on the 24th of January, 1804. The peak of Orizaba had its strongest eruptions between 1545 and 1566."—*Pol. Essay*, vol. i. pp. cxxii. iv.

it is now in a state of great dilapidation. "The plan of this edifice," says Humboldt, "is very singular. It is fortified on the side of the city. We perceive salient walls and parapets adapted for cannon, though all these parts have the appearance of mere architectural ornaments. Towards the north, there are fosses and vast vaults capable of containing provisions for several months. The common opinion at Mexico is, that the house of the viceroy at Chapoltepec is a disguised fortress. Count Bernardo de Galvez was accused of having conceived the project of rendering New Spain independent of the Peninsula; and it was supposed that the rock of Chapoltepec was destined for an asylum and defence in case of attack from the European troops." There is now a manufactory of arms here, belonging to the Government. The grounds, for some distance round the mountain, are laid out in walks, or terraces, raised above the level of the surrounding country, and beautifully shaded by cypress and mastic trees.* From the castle, there is a magnificent view of the whole basin of Mexico. "Nothing," says the learned Traveller, "can present a more rich and varied appearance than the valley, when, in a fine summer morning, the sky without a cloud, and of that deep azure which is peculiar to the dry and rarefied air of high mountains, we transport ourselves to the top of one of the towers of the cathedral of Mexico, or ascend the hill of Chapoltepec. A beautiful vegetation surrounds this hill. Old cypress trunks of more than fifty feet in circumference, raise

* "The *schinus*," says the American Traveller, describing this spot, "is somewhat like our weeping-willow, but more elegant, and is an evergreen. The berries, which are red, hang in clusters very ornamentally, are aromatic, and are used by the natives to season their food."

their naked heads above those of the *schinus*, which resemble in their appearance the weeping-willows of the East. From the centre of this solitude, the summit of the porphyritical rock of Chapoltepec, the eye sweeps over a vast plain of carefully cultivated fields, which extend to the very feet of the colossal mountains covered with perpetual snow. The city appears as if washed by the waters of the lake of Tezcuco, whose basin, surrounded with villages and hamlets, brings to mind the most beautiful lakes of the mountains of Switzerland.* Large avenues of elms and poplars lead in every direction to the capital; and two aqueducts, constructed over arches of very great elevation, cross the plain, and exhibit an appearance equally agreeable and interesting. The magnificent convent of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe* appears joined to the mountain of Tepeyacac, among ravines which shelter a few date and young *yucca* trees. Towards the south, the whole tract between San Angel, Tacabaya, and San Augustin de las Cuevas, appears an immense garden of orange, peach, apple, cherry, and other European fruit-trees. This beautiful cultivation forms a singular contrast with the wild appearance of the naked mountains which enclose the valley, among which the famous volcanoes of La Puebla,

* "The refraction of the sun's rays from large masses of snow," remarks the American writer, "is beyond description magnificent, and no colouring can do justice to the variety and richness of the tints which, in some situations, are thrown upon a whole landscape. The scenes of Mexico and Switzerland have *only this feature in common;* but that is so strikingly beautiful, as frequently to carry me back to the delightful period when I wandered over the mountains of the Alps." The prospect which Humboldt describes as so beautiful on a fine summer's morning, this Traveller speaks of in similar terms as it appeared towards sunset, and mellowed in the shades of twilight, till he had watched the last rays of the sun refracted in splendid tints from the snowy mountains.

Popocatepetl and Iztaccihuatl, are the most distinguished."

The magnificent church of *Nuestra Señora de Guadalupe*, built on the barren, rocky hill of Tepeyayac, is a short distance from the city. It is famed for possessing a miraculous picture of the Virgin, with regard to the finding of which by a peasant, there is a ridiculous legend, which is recorded in a huge folio, and is here devoutly believed. The church is munificently endowed, and "the picture has wrought and continues to work many miracles." Silver medals of the Virgin are sold by the priest at a high price, as talismans to be worn round the necks of the faithful. At a short distance from the church, there is a small chapel, and a spring of mineral water.

There is another mineral spring at the *Peñon de los Baños* (rock of baths), where there are baths constructed for the use of invalids, which are much frequented. These waters contain carbonic acid, sulphate of lime and soda, and muriate of soda. Those of the *Peñon* are very warm. Near this spring, there are some salt-works, which are as old as the time of Montezuma; nor has any change taken place in the rude process by which the muriate of soda is separated from the clay, except the substitution of caldrons of beaten copper for the old earthern vats. The water, after the earth is washed, is not found to contain more than 12 or 13 *per cent* of salt, and what is thus manufactured is very impure; but it sells for a dollar the *arroba* (25 lbs.).

Another interesting excursion is, to ascend the canals of Istacalco and Chalco to the *chinampas*, or floating gardens, and the lake of Chalco. There are two sorts of *chinampas*, floating and fixed; but the number of the former, to which alone the name of

floating gardens properly applies, is daily diminishing. Plots of earth carried away by the floods, first suggested, probably, the invention; but the industry of the ancient Mexicans carried this system of cultivation to perfection. The moveable *chinampas*, which were numerous at the time of the conquest, and some of which still exist in the lake of Chalco, are rafts formed of reeds, rushes, roots, and branches of brushwood, and covered with black mould obtained from the bottom of the lake. They are moved by the winds, but can also be pushed in any direction by means of long poles. They sometimes contain even the cottage of the Indian who superintends a groupe of these floating gardens.* The fixed *chinampas* are parallelograms of from three to four hundred feet long, and twenty wide, (there are some much smaller,) separated by narrow ditches, the soil of which serves to raise the garden, and to manure it. They are in general from three to four feet above the surface of the water. "We saw labourers employed in cleaning the ditches," says the American, "and scattering the weeds over the beds. Others were hoeing the ground. On these *chinampas*, they cultivate beans and peas, chile pepper, cauliflowers, artichokes, and a great variety of vegetables and flowers. The soil is a rich vegetable mould, resembling our rice-swamps; and as it is easy to water these narrow strips of land, they produce with great

* The frequent inundations to which the ancient city of Tenochtitlan was liable, and the circumstance of their being surrounded with hostile tribes, rendered these *chinampas* highly important to the Aztec population. Floating gardens are also to be met with in the rivers and canals of China. Natural floating islands are found in every zone. "I have seen them," says Humboldt, "in the kingdom of Quito, on the river Guayaquil, of from 25 to 30 feet in length, floating in the midst of the current."—See also MODERN TRAVELLER, *Brazil*, vol. ii. p. 189.

luxuriance. A great part of the low land that intervenes between the lake of Tezcuco and that of Chalco, is laid out in these gardens, and cultivated by the Indians." They are generally bordered with flower beds, and sometimes with a hedge of low bushes. The "promenade in boats" around the chinampas of Istacalco, is described as one of the most agreeable that can be enjoyed in the environs of Mexico. "In the fine evenings during the dry season, hundreds of canoes of various sizes, mostly with awnings, crowded with Indians neatly dressed, their heads crowned with the most gaudy flowers, are seen passing in every direction; each boat with its musician seated on the stern, playing on the guitar, and some of the party singing, or dancing, or both." *

The intendency of Mexico extends from latitude 16° 34′ to 21° 57′ N. It is bounded on the north, by San Luis Potosi; on the west, by Guanaxuato and Valladolid; on the east, by Vera Cruz and Puebla; and extends along the coast of the Pacific from Acapulco to Zacatula, a distance of 82 leagues. Its extreme length is 136 leagues; its greatest breadth, 92 leagues. More than two-thirds of the territory are mountainous or high table-land; and from Chalco to Queretaro there extend almost uninterrupted plains, fifty leagues in length by eight or ten in breadth. The population in 1803, was estimated at 1,511,800, being 255 inhabitants to the square league. Besides the capital, the most remarkable cities and towns of the intendency are, *Tezcuco*, which formerly possessed very considerable cotton manufactories, and had, in 1803, a population of 5000; *Cuyoacan; Tacubaya*, containing the archbishop's

* Humboldt's Pol. Essay, vol. ii. pp. 73—76; Notes on Mexico, pp. 78, 79; Bullock, p. 176.

palace and a beautiful plantation of European olive-trees; *Tacuba*; *Cuernavaca*, on the southern declivity of the Cordillera, in a delicious climate; *Chilpansingo*; *Tasco*, (or *Tlachco*,) containing a beautiful parish church, constructed and endowed, towards the middle of the eighteenth century, by Joseph de Laborde, a Frenchman, who rapidly gained immense wealth by mining;* *Acapulco*; *Zacatula*, a small seaport on the frontier of Valladolid; *Lerma*; *Toluca*; *Pachuca*, reckoned, next to Tasco, the oldest mining place in the kingdom; *Cadereita*, famed for its quarries of porphyry; *San Juan del Rio*; and *Queretaro*, the next place in importance to the capital.

The most important mines of this intendency, considered in relation to their present wealth, are stated (by Humboldt) to be, *La Veta Biscaina de Real del Monte*, near Pachuca; *Zimapan*, *el Doctor*, and Tehulilotepec, near Tasco. The mines of Themascaltepec (or Temascaltepec), visited by Mr. Bullock, belong to the groupe of Tasco, classed by Humboldt as the seventh in importance, extending from lat. 18° 10′ to 19° 20′, and from long. 101° 30′ to 102° 45′ W. (from Paris.)† We shall avail ourselves of the English

* The building of the church alone cost its founder upwards of 87,000*l.* sterling. He was afterwards, through reverses, reduced to great poverty; and he obtained permission of the archbishop to sell, for his own benefit, to the metropolitan cathedral, the magnificent *custodia* set with diamonds, which, in his better days, he had presented to the church at Tasco. With the produce of this sale (about 21,800*l.*), he withdrew to Zacatecas, and again set to work on the *veta grande*, where, a second time, he acquired immense wealth, and, at his death, left his only son a fortune of 125,000*l.* The son afterwards entered the church.

† He distributes the principal mines of Mexico into eight groupes, naming them from the chief place or central point: 1. Central Groupe (Guanaxuato, Catorce, and Zacatecas). 2. Groupe of Durango and Sonora. 3. Groupe of Chihuahua. 4. Groupe of

Traveller's account of his visit to these mines, distant from the capital about thirty leagues.

FROM MEXICO TO TEMASCALTEPEC.

HAVING received an invitation from Mr. Smith Wilcox, the American Consul-general, to visit a silver-mine, on which he was then erecting a steam-engine for the purpose of clearing it of the water that had prevented its being worked for several years,—Mr. Bullock and his friends left the city early in the day, in a carriage drawn by seven mules, and at eight o'clock in the evening reached Lerma. Their route led by the hill of Chapoltepec, and, two miles further, through the "village" of Tacubaya, "finely situated on the first rising ground, and principally composed of the beautiful houses, villas, and superb gardens of the nobility and rich citizens of the capital." A little above the town, not far from the bishop's palace, is gained, Mr. Bullock says, the noblest view of the city, although not equal, probably, as a view of the valley, to that from the towers of the cathedral, or that from Chapoltepec. An uninteresting road succeeds, constantly ascending, for nearly ten miles, to a *hacienda*, near which rises "the fine stream of water that forms the principal supply for the capital." The springs of Santa Fé must be alluded to, which rise in the mountains that separate the valley of Mexico from that of Toluca. Having crossed these mountains, they descended to Lerma, which is situated at the entry of the valley or plain, in a marshy ground. It is a regularly built town, but

la Biscaina (Pachuca). 5. Groupe of Zimapan. 6. Groupe of New Gallicia (Guadalaxara). 7. Groupe of Tasco. 8. Groupe of Oaxaca.—*Pol. Essay*, vol. iii. p. 145.

consists principally of small houses, and appears never to have been finished.

The next morning, leaving Lerma soon after daylight, the travellers passed the end of a lake which has evidently been much larger, and proceeding across a highly cultivated plain, studded with *haciendas*, in two hours reached Toluca, a distance of twelve miles. This town is described by Humboldt as lying at the foot of the porphyritic mountain of San Miguel de Tutucuitlalpilco, in a valley abounding in plantations of maguey and fields of maize. "Like most of the Mexican cities," says Mr. Bullock, "it is handsome, and regularly built. Its exterior presents an appearance of prosperity I had not seen before: several new buildings were constructing. It has considerable manufactories of soap and candles; the best hams and sausages in New Spain are said to be cured here; we observed several manufactories of them, and admired their fine breed of hogs.

"We left Toluca in the coach, and proceeded about two leagues further, where the road for wheel-carriages ceases. Here, having procured horses and mules for the whole party, which had been augmented by the addition of several persons going to the mine (among them a Yorkshire blacksmith), we ascended about a league, and then entered an extensive wood, which crowned the Cordillera, on the west side of the table-land of Mexico. This was by much the most beautiful scene I had witnessed in America; abounding with trees of the noblest form and loftiest height, most of them entirely new to me, but among them oaks and pines, whose size and luxuriance eclipsed any thing seen in the Alps or in Norway. We still continued to rise, and in one elevated open place caught the last view of the mountains that surround the vale of

Mexico: on our left lay the volcano of Tolnca, covered with perpetual snow; and shortly after, we reached a defile in the mountain, and began to descend towards the Pacific Ocean.

"The scenery was now inexpressibly grand. The ground, being broken into abrupt hills, afforded many openings, through which the tops of the immense forests below were seen to the greatest advantage. In many places, for a considerable distance, our path was shaded by trees of an amazing height, so close as almost to exclude the light, on emerging suddenly from which, the most enchanting prospects were spread beneath our feet; the summits of gigantic volcanoes, receding like steps beneath us, seemed to lead the eye to the waters of the Pacific, to which the mountain-torrents we passed were hastening. The descent now became very steep, so that in many places we were obliged to alight from our mules, and proceed with cautious steps over broken masses of basalt and other volcanic substances, where not a trace of the labour of man was visible, or any circumstances that could remind us of being in an inhabited country; except occasionally meeting small groupes of Indians, carrying the productions of their little farms to the market of Toluca, or even as far as Mexico. From these simple people the unprotected traveller has nothing to fear; they are the most courteous, gentle, and unoffending creatures in existence, and never pass without saluting a stranger. Their burthens consisted generally of fruit, fowls, turkeys, mats, shingles of wood for roofs of houses, and sometimes of charcoal. They generally had their wives and daughters with them; clean, modest-looking women, carrying heavy burthens exclusive of the children usually fastened on their backs. After a descent

of several hours through this ever-varying and sublime scenery, to the effect of which a thunder-storm added much majesty, we arrived at a small plain, surrounded on all sides by pine-capped mountains. In the centre of this, in the midst of highly cultivated ground, rose the neat little Indian church and village of St. Miguel de los Ranchos, placed in one of the most delightful situations and lovely climates in the world. On the mountain we might almost have complained of cold, but the descent had brought us into a temperature resembling the finest parts of Europe, and our approach to the village just before sunset brought home strongly to our recollection. Our path lay through corn-fields, orchards, and gardens. Apples, pears, and peaches, almost obstructed our way; and fields of potatoes and beans in blossom might, but for the swarthy and thinly clothed inhabitants, who gazed with surprise at our advance, and the luxuriance of the nopal, or the great American aloe, in full bloom, have made us fancy ourselves in England."

A small room, called the *comunidad*, adjoining the church, is provided by Government for the accommodation of strangers. Having spread their mattresses here, and ordered supper, Mr. Bullock walked out to examine the village. It was the eve of St. Mark, "or, as the Indians called him, *Nuestro Bueno Amigo* (our good friend)." The church, which is gaudily ornamented with pictures and statues, had been dressed for the festival, with fruits, flowers, palm-blossoms, &c., disposed in arches, chaplets, and other devices; and opposite the door, under a venerable cedar, was a small altar decorated in a similar manner, with the strange and barbarous addition of "several human skulls quite clean, and as white as ivory." Respecting the meaning or origin of this

ornament, our Traveller does not seem to have made any inquiry; there can be little doubt of its being a relic of the old idolatry, in strict harmony with the subsequent performances. That the skulls were honestly obtained, may be taken for granted, as these gentle, unoffending Indians are, moreover, Christians. Round the great tree, some men were employed in splitting pieces of "candle-wood," a species of pine which, when lighted, burns with a clear flame; and before Mr. Bullock had completed his ramble through the village and the surrounding maguey-plantations, the performance in honour of St. Mark began. "The bell suddenly tolled in a quick manner, and in an instant the churchyard was brilliantly illuminated by the flame of eight piles of the candle-wood, prepared for that purpose; the effect was heightened by its being quite unexpected. On my entering the churchyard, four men discharged a flight of rockets, which was instantly answered by a similar salute from every house in the place: this was the commencement of the fête for the following day. In a quarter of an hour the bonfires were extinguished, and the church doors closed; and we retired to our place of rest, to take the homely supper provided for us by our new friends, which had been prepared in a house in the village. Our meal was not finished when a message requested our speedy attendance in the church: on entering, we found it illuminated, and crowded by numbers of persons of both sexes. Dancing, with singular Indian ceremonies, had commenced in front of the altar, which, to my astonishment, I immediately recognised to be of the same nature as those in use before the introduction of Christianity. The actors consisted of five men and three women, grotesquely but richly dressed, in the fashion

of the time of Montezuma. One young man, meant to personate that monarch, wore a high crown, from which rose a plume of red feathers. The first part of the drama consisted of the representation of a warrior taking leave of his family preparatory to going to battle: a man and woman danced in front of the altar, and clearly expressed the parting scene, and knelt down and solemnly prayed for the success of his undertaking. The next act commenced with two warriors, superbly dressed; one, a Mexican, was distinguished by the superior height of his head-dress, and by a piece of crimson silk suspended from his shoulders: after dancing some time, a mock fight began, which, after various evolutions, terminated of course in the Mexican taking his enemy prisoner, and dragging him by his hair into the presence of his sovereign; when the dance was resumed, and the vanquished frequently implored mercy, both from his conqueror and the monarch. The various parts were admirably performed: no pantomime could be better; and I almost expected to see the captive sacrificed to the gods. The audience seemed pleased with our attendance, except one old man, who appeared to think we had seen too much; he was a little elevated with pulque, but some of the younger ones carried him out. In dancing, the women accompanied their motions and the music with a slight instrument in the right hand; it was a rattle, made of a small gourd ornamented with silver bells, and had a pleasing effect. I tried to buy one of these, but they refused to part with it. One old man seemed to act in a threefold capacity: he was fiddler, or leader of the band; master of the ceremonies; and, if I mistake not, represented the high-priest. He wore a white dress, over which were placed wreaths of small green leaves; and he apparently regulated

the whole performance of the drama. On one occasion, when the royal Montezuma received the homage of his prisoner, the monarch remained standing, which being contrary to the etiquette of his court, he was gently reminded of the error by getting a smart stroke on the cheek with the fiddlestick of the high priest; on which his majesty immediately squatted, and received with propriety the address of his general and the supplication of his prisoner."

On retiring to rest, Mr. Bullock and his friends were serenaded, and the party knocked for admission, but were very properly denied. About midnight, the revels recommenced, and were concluded with a flight of rockets. And this is what the Church of Rome has taught these poor "children of nature" to consider as Christian devotion!

The travellers regretted not being able to stay to see the fête of the ensuing day; but, being still eighteen miles from the mine, they thought it desirable to push forward. After half an hour's ride through the little farms and plantations extending round the town, they again plunged into magnificent woods, and soon began to ascend towards the mountain regions. A more open and cultivated country succeeded, and they travelled for some time near a rapid river, the banks of which were covered with fields of wheat and maize. Among the fruits that presented themselves in their tangled path, were "our common blackberry, in greater perfection than in Europe," and some very good strawberries. At length, passing a few barren hills, worn by torrents into the most extraordinary forms, through a sterile, sandy district, they came in view of a fine country; and a mile of steep and difficult descent brought them to the town of Themascaltepec, romantically situated in a deep

valley, on the only spot sufficiently level for the purpose, near the junction of three rapid mountain-streams. The town, which is now in a state of decay, contains, Mr. Bullock supposes, about one thousand inhabitants. He was the first Englishman who had visited it. "The situations of mines," he remarks, "are, in general, in sterile and barren districts, but those of Themascaltepec are an exception. It would be difficult for the traveller to point out a more lovely or romantic situation than the little town in which this mine is situated. The plentifully supplied market exhibits a profusion of every variety of vegetable and animal production that can be met with in Europe and America. In the same field may be seen the finest European wheat, plantations of sugar-cane, and fences of the Agave Americana. The culinary vegetables are equally fine and cheap; the market well supplied with beef, mutton, pork, and poultry, at a reasonable rate. The climate is still finer than at Mexico; it is seldom warmer, and never so cold; there is scarcely a change except during the wet season, when rain may be expected every afternoon. At this time the vegetation is surprisingly luxuriant. The variety of flowers and ornamental plants yet unknown to European botanists, exceeds all enumeration. The roads in the neighbourhood are almost impassable, from the festoons and arches formed by the variety of creepers which choke the way: wild vines, convolvuli, and passifloras, form thickets that are penetrated with difficulty. One undescribed tree, twenty feet high, with its bright green foliage, and flowers like clusters of roses,* is seen at every step as you traverse the banks of the three streams that surround the town, and whose

* "Now growing in the botanic garden at Chelsea."

waters flow through every part, brought by means of aqueducts. Themascaltepec is the capital of one of the smallest mining districts in New Spain; yet, its average annual produce, during the time the mines were at work, was 260,000 marcs of silver. The town is situated in a small valley surrounded by mountains containing silver, copper, and lead, and whose surfaces are mostly covered with wood, among which the Indian cottages and plantations produce a very pleasing effect. The houses are mostly of one story, and covered with a large projecting roof of wooden shingles, admirably adapted to the climate: they have but few glass windows, and no chimneys, as the temperature is such as to render fire at all times unnecessary, except for culinary purposes, when charcoal only is used in simple brick stoves.

"The inhabitants of Themascaltepec are courteous and civil to strangers; they are very constant in their devotions at church, most of the ladies attending Divine service every morning and evening, and their behaviour is as modest as I ever witnessed. The town has a well-supplied weekly market on Sundays, when the assemblage of Indians is very numerous, and their conduct decent and becoming: here they are very unlike those of Mexico. The respect and civility with which they treat strangers, border almost on servility." There is an "upper town" of not very inviting appearance, about four miles from the lower town. The numerous streams which unite near this place, are stated to form a considerable river,—a branch, we apprehend, of the Santiago.

Mr. Bullock subsequently paid a second visit to Themascaltepec, for the purpose of taking formal possession of the silver mine of *Del Bada*, which he had purchased in the interim. The ceremony was

similar to that of infeftment, still practised in some parts of Scotland. In the presence of some of the principal inhabitants and the *padre* of the town, the proper officer took the new proprietor by the hand at the mouth of the mine, and declared him, in the name of the Government, its right and lawful owner. Mr. B. was then directed to take three stones and cast them in different directions, and afterwards to pluck up some weeds and throw them away, in token that the land and whatever it produced were at his disposal. A refection, consisting of wines, Spanish brandy, cakes, and dulces, with a few appropriate toasts and a blessing from the *padre*, closed the transaction.*

At the time of this second visit, Mr. Wilcox had nearly surmounted the difficulties he had to encounter in transporting the large pieces of his steam-engine from Vera Cruz: part had arrived, and the remainder was within a few leagues. One waggon with the beam, had nineteen mules to draw it. The machinery was transported from Vera Cruz to Toluca in waggons, and thence through the woods by rude wooden carriages built on the spot. "A shed, in the form of a cross, and as large as a cathedral, had been very ably constructed and roofed with shingles, under the direction of Don Jose Benitas, by Indians only, and without the use of iron, being lashed firmly together with thongs of raw hides." And yet, while displaying so much architectural ingenuity, they had no better expedient for removing rubbish from the mine, than dragging about half as much earth on a raw hide, which employed two men, as one man might with

* We understand that this gentleman has since disposed of his mine.

ease have removed by a common wheelbarrow. A saw for cutting planks, they had never seen, and its operation astonished them. But with regard to the extraordinary tales related of the powers of steam, they maintained an obstinate incredulity.

During his stay at Themascaltepec, Mr. Bullock witnessed a curious exhibition of Mexican agility, answering to our rope-dancing, by some itinerant native performers. Some of the feats, he says, were exactly the same as those performed before Cortes on his first arrival. "A fellow placed himself on the ground, raised his bare feet, and received on them a beam of wood, eight feet long, and eight inches thick, which he threw several times into the air, catching it again on the soles of his feet; he then caused it to spin round like the fly of a jack,—when, changing his manner of striking it, he made it turn lengthways, with great velocity throwing it from one foot to the other, so that the bells fastened to the ends of it kept time to the music. After amusing us awhile in this way, he rested a few minutes, when two boys were suspended to the ends of the beam, which he again balanced and threw with them into the air, receiving them altogether on his feet. They were then put into rotatory motion, and turned with such violence, that one of the lads fainted: this put an end to the exhibition, which was attended by some of the first people in the place, who provided their own seats, though some families had only a mat spread on the ground. Ices, dulces, &c. were served during the time of exhibition. The place was illuminated by two fires of candle-wood, raised about seven feet from the ground. The company seemed highly delighted, and the behaviour of the lower classes was very orderly, although

there was no lack of mirth, as the Indian who enacted the clown, performed his part in a manner which would not have disgraced Grimaldi himself. His comical remarks excited the most boisterous merriment, in which I was obliged to join at my own expense, as he made several pointed allusions to a stranger who had arrived at Themascaltepec from the other side of the world, to feast on humming-birds, beetles, butterflies, and lizards." *

MEXICO TO TEZCUCO AND OTUMBA.

"THE only ancient monuments in the valley of Mexico, which, from their size or their masses, can strike the eye of a European, are, the remains of the two pyramids of San Juan de Teotihuacan, situated to the north-east of the lake of Tezcuco, consecrated to the sun and moon, and called by the Indians *Tonatiuh Ytzaqual* (house of the sun), and *Metzli Ytzaqual* (house of the moon)." Soon after Mr. Bullock's return from Themascaltepec, he set out on an excursion in search of the interesting remains thus designated by Humboldt, attended by an Indian guide. The usual road lay round the borders of the lake of Tezcuco, but its sandy bed was now quite dry, and his conductor led him across it, which shortened the journey above a league. "Only seven weeks before, the ditches were filled with water, and covered by

* The rocks round the town abound with an elegant species of lizard, of a dark blue and orange colour. Fire-flies are very numerous and beautiful. Mr. Bullock shot several humming-birds, and, among some birds of undescribed species, "a species of thrush of a deep lead colour, whose note is not surpassed by any of that musical family."

myriads of shoveller ducks and other aquatic birds, and Indians were employed in fishing; but, owing to the unusually dry season, the whole had become an arid desert, and sent forth such effluvia as, in a less elevated country, would have been productive of the worst consequences." For some time before the traveller reaches the gates of Tezcuco, he is apprised of his approach to a place of ancient importance, by a large aqueduct, still in use, and the ruins of several stone buildings of great strength. A bridge over which the road passes, *Puente des Brigantinas*, points out the place where Cortes launched his brigantines; but it is now a league and a half from the water. A little beyond, there are foundations of ancient edifices of considerable magnitude.

On entering the gates, several *tumuli* are seen on the right, which Mr. Bullock supposes to have been *teocallis;* but he gives no further description of them. During the Revolution, the town was surrounded by a fosse, in digging which the foundations of several large structures were brought to light. The "Spanish palace," built soon after the conquest, is large, and has been handsome, but is now in a ruinous state. The "Spanish quarters or barracks built by the young cazique of Tezcuco for Cortes," are still entire: they are surrounded by a wall twenty feet high, "on the top of which the traces of the walks of the Spanish centinels are distinctly visible;" and a recess in the wall is shewn, which was used for the celebration of mass. But the most important remain is what Mr. Bullock calls the site of the palace of the ancient caziques or kings of Tezcuco, and which far surpassed, he says, though in ruins, every idea that he had formed of the architectural abilities of the ancient Mexicans.

" It extended for 300 feet, forming one side of the great square, and was placed on sloping terraces, raised one above the other by small steps. Some of these terraces are still entire, and are covered with cement, very hard, and equal in beauty to that found in ancient Roman buildings. From what is known of the extensive foundations of this palace, it must have occupied some acres of ground. It was composed of huge blocks of basaltic stone, of about four or five feet long, and two and a half, or three feet thick, cut and polished with the utmost exactness. The great church, which stands close by, is almost entirely built of materials taken from the palace, many of the sculptured stones from which may be seen in the walls, though most of the ornaments are turned inwards. Indeed, our guide informed us, that whoever built a house at Tezcuco, made the ruins of the palace serve as his quarry." This spot will particularly deserve the attention of future travellers. It is to be regretted, that Mr. Bullock does not give the height and other measurements of the terraces; from his description, however, they would seem to have been the basis of a *teocalli*, rather than of a palace. In many parts of the walls and pavements, fragments of sculptured stones may be seen; and in a small house, Mr. B. found the spread eagle and nopal, " the ancient arms of Mexico," with hieroglyphic characters. Raised mounds of bricks are seen on all sides, with ruined aqueducts and other remains; and in fact, Tezcuco, styled by a Spanish historian the Athens of Anahuac, would seem to invite above all other places in Mexico, the investigations of the antiquary. It was here, in the market-place, that the zeal of the first bishop led him, possibly in imitation of the Ephesian magi, to

commit to the flames all the Aztec paintings and hieroglyphic writings which he could collect, amid the unavailing remonstrances of the natives.

About two leagues from Tezcuco, is another highly interesting spot, called *Baño de Montezuma*, Montezuma's Bath, on the summit of a conical hill, called Tescosingo. For an interesting description of this singular place, we are indebted to the same Traveller. "We employed our horses as far as they could take us, but the unevenness of the ground at last obliged us to dismount. Having fastened them to a nopal-tree, we scrambled with great difficulty through bushes and over loose stones, which were in great quantities on all sides, and at last perceived that we were on the ruins of a very large building; the cemented stones remaining in some places covered with stucco, and forming walks and terraces, but much encumbered with earth fallen from above, and overgrown with a wood of nopal, which made it difficult to ascend. In some places, the terraces were carried over chasms by solid pieces of masonry; in others, cut through the living rock: but, as we endeavoured to proceed in a straight line, our labour was very great, being sometimes obliged to climb on our hands and knees. By the assistance of underwood, however, at length, after passing several buildings and terraces, the stucco of which appeared fresh and of a fine peach colour, we arrived at about two-thirds of the height of the hill, almost exhausted with our exertions; and great indeed was our disappointment when we found that our guide had mistaken the situation, and did not know exactly where we were. Greatly chagrined, we began to retrace our steps; and luckily, in a few minutes, we perceived the object of our search. It was cut in the solid rock, and standing out like a martin's

nest from the side of a house. It is not only an extraordinary bath, but still more extraordinarily placed. It is a beautiful basin, about twelve feet long by eight wide, having a well about five feet by four deep in the centre, surrounded by a parapet or rim two feet six inches high, with a throne or chair, such as is represented in ancient pictures to have been used by the kings. There are steps to descend into the basin or bath; the whole cut out of the living porphyry rock with the most mathematical precision, and polished in the most beautiful manner. This bath commands one of the finest prospects in the Mexican valley, including the greater part of the lake of Tezcuco, and the city of Mexico, from which it is distant about thirty miles. As we descended, our guide shewed us in the rock a large reservoir for supplying with water the palace, whose walls still remain eight feet high; and as we examined further, we found that the whole mountain had been covered with palaces, temples, baths, hanging-gardens, &c. Yet, this place has never been noticed by any writer.* In our way down, we collected specimens of the stucco which covered the terrace, still as hard and beautiful as any found at Portici or Herculaneum. Don Trinidad Rosalia informed us, that we had seen but the commencement of the wonders of the place; that there were traces of buildings to the very top still discernible; that the mountain was perforated by artificial excavations; and that a flight of steps led to one near the top, which he himself had entered, but which no one as yet had had courage to explore, although it was believed that immense treasures were buried in it."

* It is remarkable that Humboldt should not have visited Tezcuco, or its neighbourhood. All that he says respecting it, is, that it formerly possessed large cotton manufactories.

About two miles from Tezcuco is the Indian village of Huexotla, which has also been a place of considerable importance, as its extensive and strong walls and other ruins still testify. "On our approach," continues Mr. Bullock, "we observed several of the small pyramidical mounts, composed of alternate layers of clay and unburnt brick. One of them had evidently an entrance to the centre, which was discovered by part of it having fallen in." Within the town are seen the foundations of a palace; and two large reservoirs by which it was supplied with water, remain in tolerable preservation: one of them, indeed, covered with a rose-coloured cement, is entire. The town is mostly in ruins, and consists of half-demolished buildings, in which the Indian and the Spanish architecture are so blended as to be with difficulty discriminated. The ancient wall, almost thirty feet high, and very thick, extends to a considerable distance. It is of a very singular construction, divided into five unequal parts. "The broadest division is built of large oval stones, with the ends standing out so as to give it the appearance of having been formed of human skulls, and it is divided from the rest by a projecting cornice." At the end of the town, beyond the walls, on the road leading to Tezcuco, a broad, covered way runs between two huge walls, terminating near a river, which has, apparently, been one of the entrances to the town. Over the bed of the river, which was now dry, and formed a deep ravine, there is a remarkable bridge with a pointed arch, nearly forty feet high, supported, on one side, by a mass of masonry in a pyramidal shape. It is ascribed to the ancient Mexicans; but, if constructed on the principle of the arch, must of course have been the work of European architects. The effect is highly picturesque. In front

of the church is a large area, entirely covered with cement, in which grow some remarkably fine olive-trees, many of them nearly thirty feet in circumference.

Mr. Bullock was unable to obtain any information at Tezcuco, respecting the celebrated pyramids of San Juan de Teotihuacan;—so little interest do the antiquities of the country excite in the minds of the present inhabitants! And what is still more singular, not even the padre at Otumba could satisfy his inquiries, although the pyramids were in full view from the windows of his own house. Otumba, which is said to have once contained 50,000 inhabitants, is now a wretched and deserted place, where even the water is so bad that necessity alone can induce any person to use it. The road from Tezcuco lies for two hours over a fine country, on which the number of handsome churches and *haciendas* exceeds that of any part of Mexico through which Mr. Bullock had hitherto travelled. It then passes over a barren mountain of "a soft, iron-coloured stone, in which the continual passing of horses had worn deep tracks up to the animals' knees." Upon descending the mountain, the pyramids are seen in the plain at about five or six miles' distance. "As we approached them," says Mr. B., "the square and perfect form of the largest became at every step more and more visibly distinct, and the terraces could now be counted. We rode first to the lesser, which is the most dilapidated of the two, and ascended to the top, over masses of falling stone and ruins of masonry, with less difficulty than we expected. On the summit are the remains of an ancient building, forty-seven feet long and fourteen wide; the walls are principally of unhewn stone, three feet thick and eight feet high; the entrance at the south end, with three windows on each side, and

on the north end it appears to have been divided at about a third of its length. At the front of the building, with the great pyramid before us, and many smaller ones at our feet, we sat down to contemplate the scene of ancient wonders,—where the eye takes in the greater part of the vale of Mexico, its lake and city, and commands an extensive view of the plains beneath and the mountains that bound the west of the valley.

"We soon arrived at the foot of the largest pyramid, and began to ascend. It was less difficult than we expected, though, the whole way up, lime and cement are mixed with fallen stones. The terraces are perfectly visible, particularly the second, which is about thirty-eight feet wide, covered with a coat of red cement eight or ten inches thick, composed of small pebble-stones and lime. In many places, as you ascend, the nopal-trees have destroyed the regularity of the steps, but no where injured the general figure of the square, which is as perfect in this respect as the great pyramid of Egypt. We every where observed broken pieces of instruments like knives, arrow and spear heads, &c. of obsidian, the same as those found on the small hills of Cholula; and, on reaching the summit, we found a flat surface of considerable size, but which has been much broken and disturbed. On it was probably a temple or some other building: report says, a statue covered with gold. We rested some time on the summit, enjoying one of the finest prospects imaginable, in which the city of Mexico is included. Here I found fragments of small statues and earthenware, and, what surprised me more, oyster-shells, the first that I had seen in Mexico: they are a new species, and I have brought specimens home. In descending, I also found some ornamental pieces of

earthenware, the pattern one of which is in relief, much resembling those of China, the other has a grotesque human face. On the north-east side, at about half-way down, at some remote period, an opening has been attempted. This should have been from the south to the north, and on a level with the ground, or only a few feet above it; as all the remains of similar buildings have been found to have their entrances in that direction."

According to the measurements made in 1803, by Dr. Oteyza, a young Mexican *savant*, the larger pyramid has a base of 682 feet in length, and a perpendicular elevation of 180 feet. Mr. Bullock is inclined to believe that the altitude must be nearer half the breadth. The pyramid of the moon is stated to be 36 feet lower, and its base is much smaller. They are constructed of clay mixed with small stones, covered with a thick facing of porous amygdaloid, over which was laid a coating of cement. There are four stages, which are sub-divided into smaller steps, three feet three inches high, of which the edges are still distinguishable. A stair of large hewn stones formerly led to their summits, on each of which, according to the accounts of the early travellers, there were statues covered with gold. The same writers mention the prevailing tradition that their interior is hollow, for which it is natural to suppose that there must be some foundation; and it is highly probable that they will be found, like that of Cholula, to contain sepulchral chambers. The groupes, or streets, of smaller *tumuli*,* disposed round the two large pyramids, and, according to the tradition, dedicated to the stars, leave little

* There are said to be several hundreds in the plain; in general, about thirty feet high.

room to doubt that the whole plain is a vast burial-place. This is, indeed, intimated by its Aztec name, *Micaotl*, signifying "the road of the dead," which the Spaniards, borrowing a word from the language of the Island of Cuba, have rendered *Llano de los Cues.** These monuments, according to the accounts of the first travellers, were the models of the Aztec *teocallis*, and they are supposed to be the most ancient of all the Mexican monuments. The modern Mexicans are better informed. "On asking an old Indian woman we met near the pyramids," says Mr. Bullock, "if she could tell who made them, she replied, '*Si, Señor, St. Francisco.*'"

Another ancient monument worthy of the traveller's attention, is mentioned by Humboldt as situated within this intendency, but in a different direction; the "military entrenchment of Xochicalco," near Tetlama, within the parish of Xochitepec, two leagues to the S. S. W. of the town of Cuernavaca,† which occurs in the road to Acapulco. It is an insulated hill about 370 feet high, formed into five terraces, which are covered with masonry; the whole forming a truncated pyramid, of which the four faces accurately correspond, like the pyramids of Teotihuacan, to the four cardinal points. The porphyry stones are of a very regular cut, and are adorned with hieroglyphic figures, among which are to be seen crocodiles spouting up water, and what is very remarkable, men sitting cross-legged in the Asiatic manner. The base is surrounded with ditches or trenches, on which account, apparently, Humboldt styles it "a military entrenchment," although answering in all respects to the character of

* Humboldt, Pol. Essay, vol. ii. pp. 46, 52. See note at p. 255.

† Cuernavaca is about twenty leagues from Mexico.

a teocalli, except that, from its magnitude, it appears certain that the "hill" cannot be an artificial elevation. There is nothing in the circumstance of its having been made use of as a military position, or fortified for security, that precludes the opinion that it was also a temple. The platform of this extraordinary monument exhibits the ruins of a small square edifice, which, says Humboldt, "undoubtedly served for a last retreat to the besieged." *

ACAPULCO.

Of the other towns in this intendency, the only one which appears to claim distinct notice, is what this Traveller justly styles, in reference alike to its appearance and its unhealthiness, "the miserable town" of Acapulco, but of which Captain Basil Hall speaks in the following terms. "On the 8th of March (1822) we anchored in Acapulco harbour, a name familiar to the memory of most people, from its being the port whence the rich Spanish galleons, of former days, took their departure to spread the wealth of the Western over the Eastern world. It is celebrated also in Anson's delightful Voyage, and occupies a conspicuous place in the very interesting accounts of the Buccaneers: to a sailor, therefore, it is classic ground in every sense. I cannot express the universal professional admiration excited by a sight of this celebrated port, which is, moreover, the very beau ideal of a harbour. It is easy of access; very capacious; the water not too deep; the holding-

* Pol. Essay, vol. ii. p. 52.—The platform is stated to contain more than 9,000 square metres, which the translator makes to be equal to 96,825 square feet. We suspect that a very material error has crept into this statement.

ground good; quite free from hidden dangers; and as secure as the basin in the centre of Portsmouth dock-yard. From the interior of the harbour the sea cannot be discovered; and a stranger coming to the spot by land would imagine he was looking over a sequestered mountain-lake.

"The appearance of the country people at Acapulco differs from that of the South Americans. Their features and colour partake somewhat of the Malay character; their foreheads are broad and square; their eyes small, and not deep-seated; their cheek-bones prominent; and their heads covered with black straight hair; their stature about the medium standard; their frame compact and well made. These are the country people who come to market with poultry, fruit, and vegetables, and are generally seen seated in the shade under the verandas of the houses, or in their own ranchas, which are sheds made of mats loosely pinned together.

"We took notice of another class, less savage in appearance than that just described, and rather more interesting: they are the labourers and carriers of burdens employed about the town, — a tall, bold-looking, strong race of men; they wear a hat, the crown of which is raised not more than three inches above a rim of such unusual width, that it serves as an umbrella to shade the whole body. Round their neck is suspended a large flap of stiff yellow leather, reaching below the middle, and nearly meeting a pair of greaves of the same material, which envelope the thigh; the calves of the leg are in like manner wrapped round with pieces of leather tied carelessly on with a thong; over the foot is drawn a sort of wide, unlaced half-boot, which is left to float out like a wing from the ankle. These figures are

striking and highly picturesque. Their colour is a bright copper, and they probably have some intermixture of Spanish blood in their veins.

"The negroes form a third class at Acapulco. They were originally imported from Africa; but in the course of time, they have become a mixed race, with the aborigines, and thus, also, may possibly partake of a slight dash of Spanish blood. The result, however, is a very fine race of men: they retain the sleek, glossy skin, the dark tint of the negro, and his thick lip; along with which we now see the smaller form, the higher forehead, prominent cheek-bone, the smaller eye, and the straight hair of the Mexicans; together with many other mingled traits which a closer observation would be able to discriminate; but which a stranger is merely conscious of seeing, without his being able to define exactly in what the peculiarities consist.

"With the exception of its splendid harbour, Acapulco is, commercially speaking, an insignificant place, and has been so ever since the days of the galleons. It is not well situated for commerce, as the country lying between it and Mexico is difficult to cross, and is not rich either in agricultural produce or in mines. The town, at present, consists of not more than thirty houses, with a large suburb of huts, built of reeds, wattled in open basket-work to give admission to the air.* It is guarded by an extensive and formidable fortress, called the Castle of San Carlos, standing on a height commanding the whole harbour. The inhabitants told us, when we expressed our surprise at the smallness of the town, that the greater

* Humboldt states the resident population at 4,000, adding, that it is inhabited almost exclusively by people of colour: at the time of the arrival of the Manilla galleon, it used to rise to 9,000.

part of it had been shaken down by an earthquake. If this be true, the people have been uncommonly careful in removing the materials, for not a trace remained that we could see of any ruins." *

The port of Acapulco lies, according to the observations of Humboldt, in lat. 16° 50′ 29″ N., and long. 102° 6′ W. of Paris. Captain Hall makes the longitude 99° 53′ 47″ W. of Greenwich; a variation of about 8′. The former styles it not only "the finest port of all those on the coast of the Great Ocean," but, "one of the finest in the known world." He describes it as an immense basin, excavated in granite rocks, nearly 20,000 feet in breadth from east to west. The rocky coast is so steep, that a ship of the line may almost touch it without running the least danger, as there is every where from 10 to 12 fathoms water. "I have seen," he says, "few situations in either hemisphere of a more savage aspect — more dismal, and at the same time more romantic." Yet, while the port of Vera Cruz, which affords but a bad anchorage among sand-banks, annually received from 4 to 500 vessels, that of Acapulco scarcely received ten; its whole commerce being confined to the Manilla galleon, the coasting-trade with Guatimala, Zacatula, and San Blas, and the four or five vessels annually despatched to Guayaquil and Lima. For this, various causes may be assigned, among which Humboldt mentions, the distance from the coast of China, the monopoly of the Philippine Company, and the extreme difficulty of ascending against the current and winds towards the coast of Peru. The passage from Acapulco to Lima, is frequently longer and more difficult than the voyage

* Hall's Journal, vol. ii. pp. 171—9.

from Lima to Europe. Nor is the passage from the coast of Peru to Mexico much less dangerous, owing to the dead calms which prevail near the line, the furious *papagallos* or north-easters, and the dangers of the landing. From Lima to Guayaquil may be easily navigated in six or eight days; but the passage from Guayaquil to Acapulco requires three, four, and five weeks.*

The Mexican muleteers reckon the road from Acapulco to Mexico at 110 leagues: other itineraries make it five or six leagues less; but the muleteers, Humboldt says, reckoning by time, shorten the leagues as the road becomes more difficult."†

* Capt. Hall sailed from Panama to Acapulco in thirty days (Feb. 5 to March 7). It is only from December to May inclusive, he says, that it is advisable to navigate this coast. For further important information respecting the navigation, see Hall's Journal, vol. ii., Appendix, No. 12; Humboldt, Pol. Essay, vol. i. pp. xxxiv. 85; vol. iv. pp. 55—76.

† The following computation, however, which is given as their itinerary, makes the distance only 102 leagues, unless some post be omitted.

	Leagues.
From Acapulco to the Passo d'Aguacatillo	4
To El Limon	3
— Los dos Aroyos	5
— Alto de Camaron	4
— La Guarita de los Caminos	3
— La Moxonera	½
— Quaxiniquilapa	2½
— Acaguisotla	4
— Masatlan	4
— *Chilpansingo*	4
— *Sampango*	3
— Sapilote	4
— Venta Vieja	4
	45

	Leagues.
Brought up	45
To *Mescala*	4
— Estola	5
— Palula	1½
— La Tranca del Conexo	1½
— Cuagolotal	1
— Tuspa, or Pueblo Nuevo	4
— Los Amates	3
— Tepetlalapa	5
— Puente de Istla	4
— Alpuyeco	6
— *Xochitepec*	2
— *Cuernavaca*	2
— S. Maria	¾
— *Guchilaque*	2½
	87¼

The only other sea-port in this intendency mentioned by Humboldt, is that of Zacatula, situated on the right bank of the river of that name, about a league and a half from its mouths. In 1819, it was the head-quarters of the patriot chieftain Guerrero; and Mr. Robinson gives the following description of this part of the coast.

"The river Zacatula discharges itself into the Pacific Ocean nearly in the latitude of 18° 0′ N. It has two mouths, about a league distant from each other: both these are obstructed by bars, but the northernmost one affords an entrance for boats. About 60 miles E.S.E. from this river is the harbour of Siguantanejo, which, for beauty, spaciousness, and security, is exceeded by none on the shores of the Pacific. The Spaniards, fearful lest it should become known to foreigners, have rigorously prohibited all traffic whatever at this port. Lord Anson, we believe, was the first and only foreigner that ever entered it. About fifteen miles north from Zacatula, there is also an excellent bay (*ensenada*), called Petacalco. The anchorage therein is convenient and safe, and the water is smooth during the greater part of the year. The sea-breeze sets in regularly at eight o'clock in the morning, and continues till sunset, when it is succeeded by a land-breeze, which usually blows until six or seven in the morning." * This will be found to apply, we apprehend, to certain seasons only, as at

Brought up	87¼	Brought up	95¼
To Sacapisca	2	To San Augustin de las Cuevas	3
— La Cruz del Marques	2	— Mexico	4
— El Guarda	2		102¼
— Axusco	2		
	95¼		

* Robinson's Memoirs of the Mexican Revolution, vol. ii. p. 207.

Acapulco and San Blas. This part of the coast is, however, almost unknown. The dangers of the navigation prevent its being approached in the passage from Acapulco to San Blas; and Capt. Hall gives us no account of it. The harbour of Siguantanejo, however, would seem to deserve investigation. It is named by Humboldt as a port, but he does not say a word in description of it, stating merely, that Zacatula is situated "between the ports of Siguantanejo and Colima." The latter is within Guadalaxara; and the whole intermediate coast of Valladolid, an extent of 38 leagues, is thus passed over without remark. Mr. Robinson states, that between Zacatula and Colima, extends a wilderness impassable by an army. The probability is, that it will be found to partake of the arid and insalubrious character of the *tierra caliente* of Vera Cruz. Zacatula itself is represented as a strong position, as it can be approached from the table-land only by a road which lies along the right bank of the river, and passes over the mountains for about 30 leagues, every mile of which offers defiles "where one hundred resolute men could arrest the march of one thousand." On the other hand, the difficulties of the road, and the barred entrance of the port, render it a place incapable of rising into importance.

FROM TAMPICO TO MEXICO.

Of the road to Pachuca and Real del Monte, which leads over the valley of Mexico in a northerly direction, the most detailed account we have, is contained in a narrative of a journey from Tampico, on the coast of Vera Cruz, to the capital, furnished by a friend of the Author of "Notes on Mexico." It was performed on a mule, and occupied twelve days, of

which time 36 hours were actually spent on the road. The distance is computed to be 104 leagues, or 312 miles: the rate of travelling, therefore, was rather more than three miles and a half an hour. It was in the month of June (1822), towards the close of the dry season. The first sixteen leagues lay through a very level country, with a rich, black soil, few trees, except palms, and a thinly scattered population, who suffer much in the dry season from drought. The next thirteen leagues led through a broken and hilly country, the soil much inferior; the *Rio Chiguian* was passed, nearly dried up. The fourth day's journey, seven leagues, was through a hilly country, though, in comparison of the mountains which the travellers were now approaching, the elevations are so inconsiderable, that it classes with the plains. The soil is very rich, but the timber small and scarce. Within the last league, the travellers passed the *Rio Caloboso*, whose pure, translucid waters afforded a delightful bath. On the fifth day, they travelled eleven leagues through a similar country, crossed the *Rio Tampia* and *Rio Zagualtipan*, two rivers with wide channels, but little water, and lodged at La Pesca, a village on a high hill, from which is gained a view of the mountains.

They had now travelled a hundred and forty miles through a country offering, apparently, every inducement to the husbandman, but almost without inhabitants. The fact is, that, during a great portion of the year, this district is almost destitute of water, and the rich soil cakes, hardens, and cracks to a great depth. "Of this," says the writer, "we saw many instances, and were more than once obliged to ride twenty miles and upwards, without being able to give water to our mules. Through this fine district, we

also travelled a distance of a hundred miles, without being able to purchase a feed of corn or grain of any kind. The only food the muleteers depend upon for the support of their animals, is the leaves of various bushes or little trees."

On the sixth day, they began to ascend part of the great chain of the *Sierra Madre*, and, at the distance of six leagues from La Pesca, reached the Indian village called Papatipan, at a great elevation. The ascent is very tedious and fatiguing. At mid-day, the travellers passed a very pretty stream called *Rio Zocutipan*. The seventh day, they reached the summit of the mountain, having passed some fine springs of water, and soon began to descend the southern declivity, which is still steeper, so that it was deemed safer to dismount and follow the mules. In three quarters of an hour they reached the village of Clacalula (Tlacalula?), composed of reed huts with roofs sloping to the ground. "At this village," says the writer, "we saw for the first time the natives employed in weaving a coarse cotton cloth, which is used by the women for mantles, that answer at once for bonnet and shawl. The same cloth also serves for shirts and pantaloons for such of the men as wear either: they more usually make a cotton blanket, which they dignify with the name of cloak, and a miserable pair of leather breeches, answer all the necessary purposes of clothes. After leaving Clacalula, we passed through another Indian village, called Chapula, and entered upon a most horrible road, which is, in fact, the bed of the river Cañada, but which, now partially uncovered, afforded us a passage at once difficult, curious, and sublime. This river passes, for three leagues, through a valley varying in breadth from 150 to 500 feet, bounded on either side

by precipices of white rock, in many places quite perpendicular, and from 2 to 600 feet high. In this narrow valley the river is confined; and within the space above mentioned, we crossed it seventy-six times: the whole of the road, in fact, consists in crossing and re-crossing it. On leaving the river, we commenced the ascent of the immense mountain Penulco, which consumed two hours. The ascent is steep, and the road, which is excellent, being ten or twelve feet wide and free of stones or rocks, is extremely tortuous, bringing you at every turn to the edge of precipices which regularly increase in height, danger, and magnificence. At eight o'clock on a calm and sultry evening, we reached the summit. Penulco much exceeded in height any eminence we had passed. We had travelled this day ten leagues, and passed a road that cannot be used after the rains begin to fall. Our eighth day's journey was short: we only rode from Penulco to Zagualtipan, a distance of three leagues. During this ride, however, we ascended much higher. The road was good and safe, and although the ascent was continual, it was regular. There was a freshness in the air that we had not before experienced, and we travelled without much fatigue. A fine view presented itself as we made the small descent that led us to the town of Zagualtipan, which is a place of considerable size, and has some good houses built of brick and stone. The quarries of the latter are very extensive and fine. The stone, a white limestone, is easy to work, soon becomes hard, and has a handsome appearance. With the exception of one house on the top of Penulco, the buildings we saw at this place and at Tantayanca (on the fourth day), were the only ones constructed of durable materials."

They were informed that the town contained 12,000 souls, but the writer supposes that half that number would be a large allowance. He counted only 200 buildings, churches and public offices included.

They had now reached the table-land. From Zagualtipan, a sterile, chalky descent of three leagues, in which no vegetation was visible except the prickly pear and the maguey, led them to the dry bed of the *Rio Oquilcalco.* Four leagues more, over a similar range of hilly country, but more lofty and rugged, led them to the valley of the *Rio Grande.* The descent to this river is so steep that they were again obliged to leave their saddles. The valley of Rio Grande, which is described as very beautiful, afforded a most grateful sight after the arid track they had traversed. Not more than a mile in width, enclosed between lofty mountains, it has the appearance of a large garden. It is divided into large beds by small trenches cut at right angles, which being well supplied with water from the river, completely irrigate the whole valley. The sugar-cane, maize, peas, beans, bananas, oranges, and the alligator pear, were found growing here in great abundance. The river had still much water in its channel, and "no doubt, after the rainy season, is fully entitled to its name."

The travellers passed the night at *Rio Grande*, in order to have their mules refreshed and the better prepared to encounter "the dread of muleteers, the mountain of *San Ammonica.*" At day-light, on the tenth day, they commenced the ascent, and found it not very difficult till they had nearly reached the summit, where there is a pass of a peculiar character. "As you approach it, you would conclude it impossible to mount the perpendicular precipice of about 150

feet, that presents its front to you. When you reach the foot of this precipice, a small road is perceived, which, in eight short, steep, and desperate turns, conducts you to the top, shuddering at every turn as you look down and behold under you the vast abyss. From the valley of *Rio Grande* to the summit of *San Ammonica*, occupied an hour and a quarter. On reaching the top of this mountain, a large plain is seen, through which the road continues without interruption, to the foot of Real del Monte, — a distance of twenty-two miles. This plain appears well adapted for cultivation, being nearly level, and bounded by hills that are not very lofty. Many successful attempts at the production of sugar and grain were to be seen, and one immense estate, on which the buildings are handsome and extensive." At eleven o'clock the travellers reached the town of *Pueblo Grande de Mittan*, on the plain. There is a fine church here, and some tolerably good houses, built of unburnt brick and plaster. "Want of fuel renders it impossible to burn the bricks." The town is supplied with water from the neighbouring heights by an aqueduct. A commandant resides here, to whom the travellers were required to shew their passports. In the afternoon, they proceeded three leagues further, over a rich and partially cultivated part of the plain, to *Mittan Chiquito* (little Mittan), a small town within a mile of the foot of Real del Monte, with but few inhabitants. This completed a day's journey of nine leagues from Rio Grande.

On the eleventh day, soon after leaving Mittan Chiquito, they entered on the paved road of the Real del Monte, and passed the celebrated silver mines. The largest is now filled with water. Some of the smaller mines are still worked, though not with the same

vigour as formerly. An hour and a half brought them to the town of Real del Monte, "or rather to the remains of the town," for the principal part has been destroyed in civil conflicts. A rich and handsome church still remains, and a striking contrast is exhibited in its glittering wealth and the squalid poverty of the worshippers. In the tower are eight fine-toned bells, which have a very good effect as heard in the mountains. In another hour, the travellers reached the valley of Mexico, having the town of Pachuca on their right, distant about six miles. The road continues over the level plain for nearly eight leagues to *San Matteo Grande*, a village consisting of a fine church and a few half-demolished mud-huts. Such is the general character of the villages scattered over the plain in this direction: each has a fine, costly church, with several large bells, and the people live in mud-cabins without floors or windows, with no fuel, and almost no clothing. From a hill near San Matteo, the writer counted fifty spires in view at once, which, rising above the dwarf shrubs that conceal the wretched habitations of the people, have the appearance, he says, of so many watch-towers or telegraphic posts.

On the twelfth day, having started early from *San Matteo Grande*, the writer passed *San Matteo Chico*; and a little after sunrise, had the satisfaction of beholding the summit of Popocatepetl, distant about 150 miles. At first, he supposed it to be a silvery cloud, but its continued brilliancy, produced by the sun shining on the snow, soon undeceived him. In three leagues, he reached St. Anna; in one more, Tecama, where there is a large and richly decorated church; and in the course of the next seven leagues, he passed the villages of St. Francisco, Zumbia, Chi-

conautla, Santa Maria, San Christoval, Popatlaca, and some few others. The lakes of Tezcuco and Christoval were nearly dry, and he rode for a mile or two over the bottom of the former. At five o'clock he reached Guadaloupe, where he injudiciously determined to pass the night. This arrangement allowed him, however, to visit the splendid church of Our Lady, and *la Capilla del Pozo* (the chapel of the well). The former he describes as a large and beautiful structure: "the aisle that leads from the altar to the choir, has a massy balustrade of solid silver on either side, and is lighted by twenty-four candles, supported by as many figures of men about eighteen inches high, made also of silver." The organ is of great size. The chapel of the well is a very rich church, though not nearly so large. It has a dome about 50 feet wide and 80 feet high, handsomely decorated with good paintings, carved work, and much gilding. "At its entrance is a large well of water of a reddish colour, which is supposed to be of great service to paralytic persons: there is a great deal of fixed air in the water, but this is given to it by artificial means. The taste is pungent and pleasant, though the water is rather warm." "A fine paved way, with a double row of large trees, and a wide ditch on each side," about a league in length, conducts to the capital.*

* The following are the stages, with the distances as calculated by a guide.

	Leagues.		Leagues.
From Pueblo Viejo de Tampico—		Brought up	16
To El Arroyo del Monte ..	3½	To Los Huevas (a hacienda)	13
— Esterilla (a hacienda) ..	12½	— Tantayanca (village) ..	4
		— Las Flores (hacienda) .	3
	16		36

This road from the coast is longer, and apparently presents greater difficulties, than that from Vera Cruz.* At one time, however, the inhabitants of Mexico were so discontented with that port, that it was seriously contemplated by the Government to fix on some other point of the coast; and Tampico was one of the four places which were thought of. The other three were, Sotto la Marina near the bar of the Santander, and the mouths of the rivers Alvarado and Guasalcualco, to the south of Vera Cruz. Scarcely any of the places mentioned in the preceding narrative, except Real del Monte, are either named by Humboldt or noticed in his map; and our knowledge of the topography of the whole tract of country is very imperfect. Yet, in this direction, both westward and eastward of the route, there are some places of peculiar interest. To the north of Pachuca,

	Leagues.
Brought over	36
To La Pesca (village)	11
— Papatipan (ditto)	6
— Summit of Penulco	10
— Zagualtipan	3
— Rio Oquilcalco	3
	69

	Leagues.
Brought up	69
To Rio Grande	4
— Mittan Grande	3
— Mittan Chiquito	6
— St. Matteo	10
— Mexico	12
	104

* The following itinerary is given by the same Traveller; the distances as estimated by a guide.

From Mexico—	Leagues.
To Cordoba	10
— Rio Frio	5
— St. Martin's	8
— Puebla	8
— Nopaluca	11
— Ojo del Agua	2
— Tepeyalco	6
	50

	Leagues.
Brought up	50
To Perote	7
— Las Vegas	4
— Xalapa	7
— Plan del Rio	8
— Puente del Rey	6
— Santa Fe	8
— Vera Cruz	3
	93

Travelled in a carriage in twelve days: sixty-three hours and a quarter on the road.

and westward of the route to Tampico, are the mining districts of Zimapan and El Doctor; and to the eastward and north-eastward of Real del Monte are other mining districts, which comprise some objects of peculiar interest.* The geological character of the region is thus described by Humboldt.

The valley of Mexico is separated from the basin of *Totonilco el Grande* by a chain of porphyritic mountains, the highest summit of which, the peak of the Xacal, rises to an elevation of 10,248 feet above the level of the sea. These "enormous columns of trappean porphyry," crowned with pines and oaks, are of a very picturesque character: it is from them that the ancient Mexicans obtained the *itzli*, or obsidian, of which they formed their sharp instruments.† This porphyritic formation serves for base to the porous amygdaloid which surrounds the lakes of Tezcuco, Zumpango, and San Christobal. To the north-east of the district of Real del Monte, it is concealed under the columnar basalt of Regla, and further on, in the valley of Totonilco, under beds of secondary formation. The Alpine limestone, of a greyish blue, in which is the famous cavern of *Danto*, called "*the*

* The mines of Pachuca, one of the richest *reals* in all America, "have been wholly abandoned since the terrible fire which took place in the famous mine *del Encino*, which alone furnished more than 20,000 lb. troy of silver annually. The wooden work which supported the roof of the galleries was consumed by fire, and the greater number of the miners were suffocated before they could reach the shafts. A similar conflagration in 1787, put a stop to the working of the mines of Bolanos, which were only begun to be cleared out in 1792. The working of the mines of Moran was only resumed within these few years."—HUMBOLDT'S *Pol. Essay*, vol. iii. p. 212.

† It is described by Humboldt as "volcanic glass." The ancient mines are found between the *hacienda* of Zembo and the Indian village of Omitlan, and the spot is still called, *El Cerro de las Navajas*, the mountain of knives.

pierced mountain," or, " the bridge of the Mother of God" (*puente de la Madre de Dios*), appears to repose immediately on the porphyry of Moran.

THE BASALTIC ROCKS AND CASCADE OF REGLA

FORM one of the most remarkable natural curiosities in Mexico. The annexed plate will enable our readers to enter into Humboldt's brief description of the scene.

" The cascade of Regla is situated at a distance of twenty-five leagues north-east from Mexico, between the celebrated mines of Real del Monte and the thermal waters of Totonilco. A small river, which moves the wheel of the amalgamation-mill at Regla, forces its way across the groupes of basaltic columns. The sheet of water that rushes down, is considerable, but the fall is not above twenty-five feet. The surrounding rocks, (which remind us of the cave of Fingal at Staffa, in the Hebrides,) the contrasts of vegetation, the wild appearance, and the solitude of the place, render this small cascade extremely picturesque. On both sides of the ravine, the basaltic columns rise to more than a hundred feet in height, and on them grow tufts of cactus and *yucca filamentosa*. The prisms have generally five or six sides, and are sometimes as much as from three to four feet in breadth: several present very regular articulations. Each column has a cylindrical nucleus, of a denser mass than the surrounding parts: these nuclei are as it were enchased in the prisms, which, in their horizontal fracture, offer very remarkable convexities. This structure, which is also found in the basalts of Fairhead, is shewn in the foreground of the drawing, towards the left. The greater part of the columns are perpendicular; though some very

near the cascade have an inclination of 45° towards the east, and further on, there are others horizontal. Each groupe, at the time of its formation, appears to have followed particular attractions. The mass of these basalts is very homogeneous. The prisms repose on a bed of clay, under which is again found basalt, superposed on the porphyry of Real del Monte. The whole of this basaltic region is 6,500 feet above the level of the ocean." *

Of the cavern of Danto, which is near Totonilco, we have no account.† Like almost all natural excavations, it is found in a limestone rock. A floëtz limestone serves as a base to the basalt of Totonilco; and in the environs of Tasco, Tehuilotepec, and Limon, within the mining district, a porous compact limestone is found resting on primitive slate. The richest veins are found traversing the limestone formation. An extraordinary event occurred in the month of February 1802, which was the ruin of the works in that direction. The mines of Tehuilotepec, like those of Guautla, have at all times wanted a stream of water of sufficient volume to put in motion the requisite machinery. The most abundant stream used in the works, issued from a cavern in the limestone rock, called the *Cueva de San Felipe.* This rivulet disappeared in the night of Feb. 16; and five days afterwards, a new spring was found at five leagues' distance from the cavern, near the village of Platanillo. From this circumstance and other

* Humboldt's Researches, vol. i. pp. 273—5.

† M. Humboldt merely states, that it bears a general resemblance, or rather analogy, to the natural bridge of Icononzo in Colombia, that of Cedar Creek in Virginia, and the pierced rock near Grandola in Portugal, which will be noticed in their respective places.

geological researches, it appears, that between the villages of Chamacasapa, Platanillo, and Tehuilotepec, there exists in the heart of the calcareous mountains, a series of caverns and natural galleries; and that subterraneous rivers, "like those of Derbyshire," traverse those galleries, which communicate with one another.

Mr. Bullock gives an account of a remarkable cavern near "Tilotepec," which appears to be the very village referred to by Humboldt under a somewhat different orthography. He made an excursion to this place from Xalapa. About a league from that town, on the road to Mexico, he turned off to the right; and a few hundred yards brought him to the edge of the mountain, commanding the whole valley of Tilotepec, romantically shut in by towering cliffs and volcanic pinnacles, and covered with the richest tropical vegetation. "The town, with its crowded streets, perfectly distinct, lay almost beneath our feet, but at an amazing depth. In front of the elegant little church rises a sugar-loaf mountain, with steps cut in the solid rock, crowned by a temple in good taste, — a Spanish erection, soon after the conquest; and directly behind the town, descending from the high impending cliffs, is seen an amazingly fine waterfall, dashing its white foam in five distinct steps into the valley." Half an hour's descent brought the travellers to the stream, from which there is a slight rise to the town. The route to the cavern now lay for a short mile through a fertile valley, passing a silver mine; it then crossed, by a steep, narrow ascent, a ridge of low hills, beyond which a long valley extended to the feet of lofty and precipitous crags, thickly wooded, from the summit of which fell another cascade. Mr. Bullock halted at a *hacienda*,

and soon after leaving it, he entered on a steep ascent through a tract strewed with huge masses of compact lava, yet in the midst of which were seen many neat cottages. The scene which presented itself on gaining the summit, we give in his own words. "If I was surprised in passing the crater of the volcano, in my way to Perote,* I was astonished at here beholding the contents probably of that very crater before me, filling an extensive valley, many leagues in length, with an immense sea of lava, which, from the slope of the mountain that bounded it, I should judge in several places to be many hundred fathoms thick, — converting what had been a deep valley into a vast plain of solid rock, on whose surface the marks of its progress and violent agitation, when in a state of fusion, are as fresh as if the event had taken place but yesterday, except that in some places a few stunted and scanty specimens of vegetation appeared in some of the fissures of the iron-like lava. We rode on for about a mile and a half with tolerable ease, when the route gradually became worse. It began to assume a wave-like appearance, and the cracks or fissures were so large that our horses were in momentary danger of falling into them, so that it was impossible to take them further: we therefore left them with the Indians who had the charge of our dinner, and despatched three of our guides to the cavern, to prepare the way to the entrance, now about a mile distant, and to which they informed us it was necessary to clear the road with axes from the vegetation which had choked it up. We accordingly rested about half an hour, which gave me time to examine the place where we had halted, which certainly exhibits one of

* See p. 237.

the most extraordinary and wonderful effects of the convulsions of nature that have ever come under my observation. The basaltic formation of the Giant's Causeway, of Staffa, or the more gigantic one of the Shant Isles, falls far short of the wondrous appearance of this valley. On our first entrance upon it, the lava appeared to have cooled in almost a quiescent state, its surface being only marked by slight concentric circles: but in a short time these increased in size, and rose in sharp ridges of several feet high, and occasionally swelled in the bubble-like form seen in the crater: to these succeeded large waves, rising to a considerable height, and their tops rent into the most fantastic shapes. In other places, the lava exhibited the appearance of huge boiling caldrons, which had burst and emptied themselves in violent torrents. On the left, near the edges, cataracts, several hundred yards wide, had swept down immense masses of broken rocks, some of them many hundred tons weight;—these, floating like corks on the melted lava, had met with some impediment in their way, and remain piled upon each other by the impetuous burning stream, in the most extraordinary manner; leaving to distant ages these striking proofs of the horrid combustion of internal subterraneous fires, by which the higher mountain districts have been formed.

"One of our guides having returned to say they had found the cave, and to accompany us to it, we commenced our short journey over the scene of desolation I have been attempting to describe. We moved forward with difficulty, as, independently of the steep and sharp precipices we had to cross, there was much danger of falling into the deep fissures and rents formed by the cooling and shrinking of the melted matter which occupied the whole valley.

"We at length arrived opposite the mouth of the cave, which a smoke made by the Indians pointed out to us. It is situated about 150 feet high, on the steep side of the ridge of mountains that form the valley, amidst a thick cover of trees and underwood, in a place where there was not the slightest indication of its existence. To this it was necessary for us to climb in an almost perpendicular direction, obstructed by the roots and fallen trees often piled together, or lying one over the other: in some parts, it would have been impossible to force a passage, had not the Indians with their bills cut down the opposing bushes. Completely exhausted, breathless, and soaked in perspiration, I lay down as soon as I reached a spot where it could be done in safety; for, in the ascent, the ground was so soft that we sunk knee-deep, when unsupported by the roots and branches on its surface. After cooling for a few minutes, our flambeaus of torch-wood being lighted, we entered the cavern, and were greatly disappointed in our object, as this cave, the wonder of the neighbourhood, did not repay the labour of climbing to it. It is in a rock of limestone of no size or depth: — some large mutilated pieces of stalactite on the floor and low roof, had been magnified into statues and gods; the rest was all imagination."

The warm spring of Totonilco is probably connected with volcanic phenomena. This also will claim the attention of future travellers.

The mines of Real del Monte and Pachuca belong to the groupe of *La Biscaina*, the fourth in Humboldt's enumeration, which extends from lat. 20° 5′ to 20° 15′ N.; and from long. 100° 45′ to 100° 52′ W. They were among the first wrought by the Spaniards, and in point of the quantity of the precious metal

actually drawn from them, rank immediately after those of the central groupe. Like Guanaxuato and Zacatecas, the Real del Monte contains only one principal vein. The *veta de la Biscaina*, of less considerable dimensions, but perhaps still richer than the *veta madre* of Guanaxuato, was successfully wrought from the sixteenth to the beginning of the eighteenth century. In 1726 and 1727, the two mines of Biscaina and Xacal were still producing together 542,700 marcs of silver (356,182 lb. troy), when the miners were compelled to abandon the works, owing to the quantity of water that had filtrated through the porphyritic rock, and which they had no means of drawing off. The Count de Regla had already drawn, in 1774, a net profit of more than a million sterling from the mine of Biscaina. Besides presenting two ships of war to his sovereign, Charles III., one of them of 120 guns, he *lent* to the Court of Madrid 200,000*l*., which were never repaid; he erected the great works of Regla, at an expense of 400,000*l*., and he purchased estates of an immense extent, bequeathing to his children a fortune which has been equalled in Mexico only by that of the Count de la Valenciana. In 1803, the mine of the Count de Regla was still yielding annually more than from 50 to 60,000 marcs, or from 30 to 40,000 lb. troy. The mines of Moran, formerly of great celebrity, had been abandoned for forty years, on account of the water having gained upon the works. Those of Tasco and Tehuilotepec, situated on the western slope of the Cordillera, have lost their celebrity since the end of the eighteenth century. They differ from those of the Real del Monte in consisting of a great number of rich veins of small size, within a short distance. Hydraulic operations and machinery, under scientific management,

may, however, yet render these mines again productive. The intendency of Mexico includes seven mining districts;* 1. Pachuca (including the Real del Monte); 2. El Doctor; 3. Zimapan; 4. Tasco; 5. Zacualpan; 6. Sultepec; 7. Temascaltepec. The mines of Zimapan and El Doctor form Humboldt's fifth groupe; those of Tasco, Zacualpan, Sultepec, and Temascaltepec, his seventh.

FROM MEXICO TO GUANAXUATO.

We are indebted to the "Citizen of the United States," whose "Notes" have been so repeatedly referred to, for the only account to which we have at present access, of the road leading from Mexico into the interior—*el camino de tierra adentro.* Having hired a coach, which was to convey him to Guanaxuato or St. Luis for 300 dollars, the Author left the capital on the 11th of November, at 2 P.M., and having passed the low, barren hills which skirt the basin of Anahuac in that direction, reached, a little after dark (about six o'clock), the village of Guautitlan. "Dirt, fleas, and all the indescribable torments of a Mexican inn," here afforded a specimen of the accommodations which await the traveller at every further stage of his progress. A two hours' stage over a

* Under the viceroyalty, New Spain was divided into 37 mining districts, each having its presiding council or deputation: viz. 1 in Guanaxuato; 4 in Zacatecas; 5 in San Luis Potosi; 7 in Mexico; 3 in Guadalaxara; 5 in Durango; 7 in Sonora; 4 in Valladolid; and 1 in Oaxaca. Besides these districts, there were "scattered mines" (*realitos*) in Puebla, Vera Cruz, and Old California, which were not under the cognizance of any deputation. Within these districts were comprised nearly 500 *reales* or places surrounded with mines, comprehending, Humboldt supposes, nearly 3000 mines.—*Pol. Essay*, vol. iii. p. 118.

poorly cultivated country brought him, the next morning, to Huehuetoca, where he halted for the day, in order to examine the famous *desague*, or drain, which deservedly ranks among the wonders of Mexico. It was designed to carry off the waters of the lakes of Zumpango and San Christoval, which formerly overflowed into that of Tezcuco, swelling the latter so as to endanger the safety of the city.* The first project was, to construct a tunnel, or subterranean gallery, to turn off the course of the river Guautitlan, and drain the lake of Zumpango. It was begun in November 1607, by the engineer Enrico Martinez; and 15,000 Indians were compelled to toil at the work for eleven months, during which they were treated with the most unfeeling severity, till at length a subterranean passage was effected upwards of 20,000 feet in length. This first tunnel, however, filled up, owing to the caving in of the earth; and it was at length determined to make an open cut through the hill of Nochistongo, which, after encountering great difficulties and more vexatious delays, was completed in the year 1789, at the cost of the lives of some thousands of Indians.

* Since the arrival of the Spaniards, the city has experienced five great inundations, viz. in 1553, 1580, 1604, 1607, and 1629. Since the last period, there have been very alarming swellings of the waters, but the city has been preserved by the *desague*. "The situation of the capital," Humboldt says, "is so much the more dangerous, as the difference of level between the surface of the lake of Tezcuco and the streets of Mexico is daily diminishing. In the inundation of 1629, occasioned by the stopping up of the tunnel, the city was inundated to the height of three feet. The *Plaza Major*, the *Plaza del Volador*, and the suburb of Tlatelcolco, alone remained dry. Boats went up and down the other streets. Contrary to every expectation, Mexico remained inundated for five years, from 1629 to 1634. The streets were passed in boats, as had been done before the conquest in the old Tenochtitlan. Wooden bridges were constructed along the sides of the houses for the convenience of foot passengers."

This canal, cut through clay, marl, gravel, and sand, is from 100 to 130 feet deep, and, at the summit, between 2 and 300 wide. Its length, from the sluice of Vestideros to the fall of the river of Tula, is upwards of 67,000 feet, or more than four leagues and a half.* The capital is still, however, exposed to inundations from the north and north-west, in the event of any sudden swelling of the lakes in that direction, through continued rains, or any sudden or extraordinary melting of the snows on the mountains.

"We descended," says our Traveller, "to the bottom of the canal, by steps cut in the indurated clay, and were very much surprised to see only a small rivulet flowing through a canal of such vast dimensions. A large body of water passes off by means of this drain in the rainy seasons; but now, the stream is not more than a foot deep, and two or three wide. The sides of the canal are so perpendicular, that they are constantly caving in; but, from the rapidity of

* "The *desague*, in its actual state, is undoubtedly one of the most gigantic hydraulical operations ever executed by man. We look upon it with a species of admiration, particularly when we consider the nature of the ground, and the enormous breadth, depth, and length of the aperture. If this cut were filled with water to the depth of 30 feet, the largest vessels of war could pass through the range of mountains which bound the plain of Mexico to the north-east. The admiration which this work inspires, is mingled, however, with the most afflicting ideas. We call to mind at the sight of the cut of Nochistongo, the number of Indians who perished there, either from the ignorance of the engineers, or the excess of the fatigues to which they were exposed in ages of barbarity and cruelty. We examine if such slow and costly means were necessary to carry off from a valley closed in on all sides, so inconsiderable a mass of water; and we regret that so much collective strength was not employed in some greater and more useful object;—in opening, for example, not a canal, but a passage through some isthmus which impedes navigation."—HUMBOLDT, *Pol. Essay*, vol. ii. p. 110.

the current, no inconvenience has arisen from the accumulation of dirt at the bottom. On the edge of the canal, we saw small hillocks formed by the rubbish thrown out in the progress of the work: they are now covered with verdure."

The country in the neighbourhood of Huehuetoca is barren and desolate. For two hours after leaving it, nothing is to be seen but white clay hills washed in ridges, planted here and there with the agave, which adds little to the beauty of the landscape. In the rainy season, this road is almost impassable; and the muleteers of New Biscay dread nothing so much in the whole journey of 500 leagues, as the road from Huehuetoca to Mexico, in which many mules perish annually. After passing the *venta* of Bata, the road, for more than an hour, lies up the acclivity of a hill, the summit of which commands an extensive view of a well-wooded but ill-cultivated plain,—the valley of Tula. The travellers reached the town early in the afternoon. It is tolerably well built, but has a gloomy appearance. The church, "a large Gothic building, having the appearance of a fortress," is in good preservation: the interior is mean, and filled with "miserable wooden images of our Saviour, daubed over with paint, to represent the blood streaming down his face, and flowing from his side."

The next day's journey, from Tula to Arroyo Sarco (a large hacienda with an execrable *mesón*), is a distance of twelve hours. The greater part of the road lies over a barren and rugged tract, but, for the last three hours, it ascends through a thickly wooded country, and the landscape in some parts reminded the American Traveller of the views in England. The habitations of the people on the road-side are miserable hovels, built of stones piled up loosely like the fences,

and not much higher, with wooden roofs; and the people of Arroyo Sarco are "as beggarly and as ugly as in any part of the kingdom."

Fourth day, from Arroyo Sarco to San Juan del Rio.—For five hours, the road still leads through a rugged, rocky tract, or barren plains; but this neat and well-built town stands in a rich and highly cultivated valley, and boasts of a comfortable inn. A stream of water flows through it, from which it takes its name; and from the summit of a basaltic rock, on which stands a chapel with a spire, there is a lovely prospect of "one of the finest valleys in the world." San Juan is 6,489 feet above the level of the sea. In the rainy season, the river, notwithstanding the width of its channel, inundates the plain to a great extent; but it was now an inconsiderable stream; and beds of rivers continually occur, that are entirely dry. The principal cultivation is that of maize.

Fifth day, from San Juan del Rio to Queretaro.—A barren, uncultivated country intervenes between the valley of San Juan, and the equally rich and fertile district in which Queretaro is situated. A lofty aqueduct of sixty arches traverses part of the valley, and conveys the water from the adjacent hills to the town, where fountains are seen in every street. Queretaro is a large and well-built town, containing many handsome public and private edifices, with the usual disproportionate number of convents and churches. The Franciscan monastery is very spacious, and has an extensive garden and shrubbery. The cloth and calico manufactures, to which the town owes its importance, are still carried on, though on a reduced scale; and the nefarious system still prevails, by which the workmen are held in a state of virtual slavery and incarceration. Out of a population of 35,000, upwards

of 11,000 are Indians. The number of ecclesiastical persons, in 1802, was 409; viz. 85 secular clergy, 181 monks, and 143 nuns. Queretaro is only 115 feet less elevated than San Juan, and only 1080 feet lower than the valley of Mexico; but its plain is reckoned to belong to the *tierra caliente*, as the tropical fruits grow here luxuriantly, and it never freezes in this neighbourhood.

Sixth day.—Three hours, over a smooth road, and through a fertile, well-cultivated country, to a *rancho*, where the traveller may find ample provision of mutton, fowls, and eggs. This road is much better supplied with provisions of every description than that of Vera Cruz. The traveller who cannot relish corn cakes (*tortillas*) and drink pulque, has only to carry with him bread and wine from town to town, in order to fare sumptuously. An hour and a half further, is the small town of Apasco. "These small towns," says the Traveller, "look best at a distance. The churches are numerous, well built, and ornamented with spires and turrets, but the houses are, for the most part, of unburnt bricks, which crumble to pieces, and they soon look gloomy and shabby."

On leaving Apasco, the traveller enters on that rich and highly cultivated tract of country called the *Baxio*, which extends to Villa de Leon, and is covered with small towns, villages, and farms. The river Santiago * fertilises the whole of this valley, and after a course equal in length to those of the Rhine and the Elbe, falls into the bay of San Blas under the name of the Rio Grande. The district is reckoned one of

* See page 163.—This river formerly separated the agricultural nations of Mexico and Mechoacan from the pastoral hordes of the Otomites and Chichimecs, who occupied the plains of Zelaya and Salamanca, in the Baxio.

the finest portions of the kingdom. It produces in great perfection all the fruits of Europe, and many of those of the tropics. The road from Apasco passes the river Laxa (or *Las Laxas*), one of the branches of the Santiago, by a handsome stone bridge of five arches. In summer, it is a deep and rapid torrent, frequently inundating the country for a considerable distance, and fertilising the soil by its waters: the channel was now dry. Near this river is the small town of Celaya (or Zelaya), which the Traveller entered at an early hour. It is very neatly built, and contains nearly 12,000 inhabitants. "The greatest curiosity in the place," says our American, "is Don Francisco Tresguerras, a self-taught artist and architect, to whom the inhabitants are indebted for the bridge over the Laxa, for some very neat private buildings, and for the splendid church attached to the convent of Del Carmen. Some of the best buildings in Queretaro were planned by him. Tresguerras accompanied us to the church. It is a very chaste building, and in good taste. In the choir we were shewn a picture of the Virgin, painted by Tresguerras himself, and highly creditable to his pencil. He is devoted to the arts, and has contributed all in his power to improve the taste of his countrymen, without any other reward than the gratification of exercising his genius, and the hope of leaving monuments of his taste to his native city. The terrace of the church commands an extensive view of the valley of Celaya, which is carefully cultivated and very thickly settled. Within every three or four leagues there are small villages with neat churches and spires; and the whole of the valley is spotted with *ranchos*. The hills that bound the valley on the east, contain a vein of cinnabar. The works are represented to be defective,

and the mine does not produce much quicksilver, although the ore is rich." The Author observed more whites in Celaya than in any other town between this place and the capital. The women are generally handsome and well made.

The traveller has now entered on the intendency of Guanaxuato, one of the finest and most populous in Mexico. It lies wholly on the ridge of the Cordillera. Its territorial extent, Humboldt says, is nearly the same as that of the kingdom of Murcia; its length, from the lake of Chapala to the N.E. of San Felipe, being 52 leagues, and its breadth, from Celaya to Villa de Leon, 31 leagues. It contained, in 1803, a population of 517,300 souls, on a surface of 911 square leagues, which gives 586 inhabitants to the square league. It comprises three cities, viz. Guanaxuato, Celaya, and Salvatierra; four towns, San Miguel el Grande, Leon, San Felipe, and Salamanca;* 37 villages (*pueblos*); 33 parishes (*paroquias*); 448 *haciendas*; and of the population, 180,000 were Indians, (52,000 of whom were tributaries,) and 425 were ecclesiastical persons, *i. e.* secular clergy, monks, and nuns.

From Celaya to Guanaxuato is a two days' journey. The road leads over a dry, sandy ridge, commanding a view of the Baxio, and passes very near the towns of Salamanca and Irrapuato, so that the churches and houses may be distinguished. Both of these "towns," says our Traveller, are neat and well built, and contain about 4000 inhabitants each. A *hacienda*, where he was hospitably received, afforded him lodging for the night. The name of the place is not mentioned;

* In this enumeration, taken from Humboldt, Irrapuato is not named among the towns,—we presume because it only ranked as a village as to its privileges.

but, within a few miles of it, the road passes a small insulated hill, in the form of a truncated cone, apparently shaped by the hand of man. This hill is the more deserving of examination, as it is situated in a district which formed no part of the Aztec territories. The road continues to lie along the ridge of barren land that skirts the Baxio, till the traveller reaches the *hacienda de Burras* (she-asses), which is, in fact, a large village containing nearly 5,000 inhabitants. The plain now insensibly rises; it is still well cultivated, and interspersed with orchards and gardens; but, as the traveller approaches the mountains, the land becomes rugged and broken, and is chiefly laid out in fields of maize. "We reached the gate of Marfil," says the writer, "a suburb of Guanaxuato, without having seen the city; it is so buried in the ravines of the mountains. On leaving the gate, we drove along the *Cañada*, the bed of a river enclosed between rocky hills, which, on this route, is the only entrance to the city. We passed some large *haciendas de plata*, a few handsome houses, and a great many ruins, the melancholy effects of the late civil wars."

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

LONDON:
PRINTED BY J. MOYES, BOUVERIE STREET.

University of California
SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
405 Hilgard Avenue, Los Angeles, CA 90024-1388
Return this material to the library
from which it was borrowed.

REC'D LD-URL

JUL 2 4 1997

UC SOUTHERN REGIONAL LIBRARY FACILITY
A 000 983 015 9

Univ
Sc
L